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Esquire

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A Late-Night
Survivor's Tale
BY BILL ZEHME

THE MAGAZINE FOR MEN
OCTOBER 1995 • \$3.00

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Esquire

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BY BILL ZIEBE

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A 1995 PHOTOGRAPH BY TIMOTHY WHITE

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Esquire

OCTOBER 1995

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THE SOUND AND THE FURY

Gere Delight

I FOUND YOUR ARTICLE on Richard Gere, "Eyes Richard Gere: Gen Darned," by Michael Gross (July), to be one of the most beautiful pieces about him, it was true and to the point, also complex, and, and very courageous. It's so refreshing that Gere is trying to stay in touch with his spirituality in this day and age and in his line of work. I'm also glad the gay issue was addressed. We really don't care if he is, never was, or isn't anymore. Gere is a really good actor who delights and entertains us—nothing else should matter.

—MARYANN MILIT
Columbus, Ohio

Up in Arms

RATHER THAN denouncing some Republicans' new trend, the Richard Gere in *Mad Dog* Country smokes in issue illustrates our anxiety about the July issue. I need to fabricate some far-reaching conspiracy to explain away our own feelings and our natural suspicion of the powers that be. If militia members could reason beyond their paranoia, they would realize that the federal bureaucracy and the United Nations can barely manage themselves let alone pull off some elaborate and clandestine assault on the American people.

—RICHARD D. SEM
Melrose, Mass.

I ENJOY reading intensely for the interviews and for the insight into the world of men it provides. Although I'd barely cracked the July issue, my accelerating heart rate made it clear that the cover of Richard Gere appealed to my primal female side. I hope my men associate these questions this square, charged state of behavior.

—KIMBERLY A. DOTHEN
San Diego, Calif.

AS I WAS COMING UP the stairs, I met a man who wasn't there. He wasn't there again today, but when he fell.

I interviewed him anyway.
—STUART JAMES WHELAN
Nashville, Ohio

I ADMIRER RICHARD GERE's apparent devotion to Tibetan Buddhism, but I question whether he truly understands its principles. Buddhism assumes a constant in the teachings of Buddha. Gere may have been awestruck from the vices of Cady Crawford, but I do not believe he was devoted when he began his affair with Laura Bailey. Perhaps he should reconsider being a poster boy for Tibetan Buddhism.

—ROBERT PERAZ
Portland, Ore.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Robert Gere may misread that Gere's agent, Ed Limon, is gay. Rapkin reports the opposite.

I DON'T FIND the militia a threat to my freedom. But I can see how the government is "to hell with investigating the militia." I went open hearings not only on Waco but on Ruby Ridge. I wrote the ATF put under the microscope. And maybe it's time for a civilian review board to be the final judge over trigger-happy cops who get away with murder. Any threat to our freedom does not come out of the barrel of a gun. It comes from a government that imposes its will on the people.

—PATRICK GRANT
Farmingdale, N.Y.

DONALD JOHNSON'S article, "The Militia in Me," as well as the prominence and approbation conferred on its author and others of like mind, has surely offered comfort and provided inspiration and support to those who, impatient or unwilling to participate in the democratic system, would prefer to take up arms against their fellow citizens and "kick Uncle Sam's sorry ass."

—DORIS B. MURPHY
Adelphi, Md.

THE STRONGEST CASE yet for the First Amendment's guarantee of free speech lies in Denis Johnson's article. Like all fascists, political fringe groups, or religious zealots using their authority, extremists expose their extremist agenda loud and clear using dissonant as a basis for apocalyptic and anarchy.

Wake up boys. Not only aren't you very bright, but you're anathema to the genre. A gay named Hitler told you all how.
—DAVE NEUBERMAN
Birmingham, N.J.

DENIS JOHNSON'S thrill about taking Americans close to nature and being around people who know how to handle guns must have overwhelmed his capacity for critical thinking. Johnson turned a blind eye to the fascist elements of the militia so he could indulge his desire to rebel. No, you don't have to be a paranoid, racist gun fiend to encourage acts of violence against innocent people in the name of your American rights—you just have to be an apolitical bystander like Johnson.

—RACHEL GREEN AND
DANIEL FISKE
Santa Barbara, Calif.

Name-dropping

YOUR SUMMER FICTION issue (July) was a tremendous read, of course, but my satisfaction bordered from insightful observations. Who are James McMillan, Owen Smith, and John Collier? Authors are always described, but your illustrations are lacking heroes.

—DAVID LEFFERT
North Brunswick, N.J.

Shortchanged

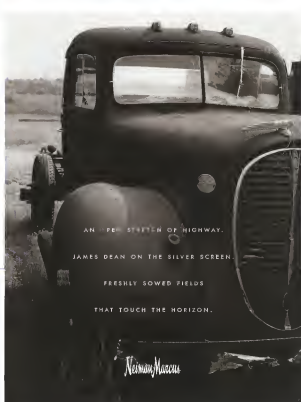
COMMENTATOR BERNARD's point in "The Boomer Go Bust" (July)—that our government will overburden the Social Security system in a few years—is valid. But the problem of our failing to save is due to an economy damaged by leveraged buyouts, downsizing, and the resultant loss of jobs, lower wages, and higher prices. Many of us find it impossible to "back away about 200 years a month." Saving will not be the solution to the economic security of the future elderly any more than the lack of saving by those same persons in the result of some moral inferiority or of their being spendthrifts.

—JOSEPH F. POWELL III
Miami, Ga.

Letters on the above should be mailed to *The Sound and the Fury*, Rapkin, c/o New York City, 10011, New York, N.Y. 10011, or sent by E-mail to rapkin@earthlink.net. Include your full name, address, and daytime phone number. Letters may be edited for length and clarity.









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THE SAGA OF JAY LENO versus David Letterman is a variation on Cain and Abel," says senior writer **Bill Zehme**, speaking, uncharacteristically, in biblical terms. "Except they keep changing roles." In other words, "Letterman started out as Johnny Carson's good son, the loyal one, whereas Leno was loyal to the network fathers." But when Letterman left NBC, Reverend Zehme says, "Leno was perceived as the good son."

In "Leno Lives" (page 48), Zehme, who profiled Letterman for *Esquire* last December, measures that fraternal struggle from their comedy-club days to the middle years, when Letterman frequently had Leno on his show ("He looked Leno-mania upon the land!" Zehme says), to the current late-night wars, of which Leno was expected to be an early casualty but Zehme believes you can never count Leno (or is it Condi) out. "He's built for endurance. The only way to stop Jay Leno is if one of his squeaks can blow up."

Zehme recently coauthored Roger Penrose's *I'm Only One Man* (Hyperion) and is at work on a biography of the late comedian Andy Kaufman.

Nicholas Pegg's "Ledy and Gert in Love in Vegas" (page 105) represents a journalist's list of sorts. The story is excerpted from Pegg's book *Cause* (to be published by Simon & Schuster), which he first wrote as a screenplay for the forthcoming Martin Scorsese film of the same name [the piece is illustrated in part with stills from the movie], starring Robert De Niro and Sharon Stone. Got all that? "This case in Las Vegas represented the last time the Tamarras and the mob would have any power," says Pegg, who has contributed to *Esquire* since 1984. "Son of a metaphor for the end of the mob itself." Pegg's last book, *Way*, was also made into a Scorsese film, *Goodfellas*.

"Dropsie Chopra walks the line between two cultures," contributing editor **Chip Brown** says of the health guru he profiles this month in "Dropsie Chopra Has (Suff's) a Cold" (page 111). "He successfully proves medical practices and the unproven, spiritually based ideas about the mind and the body." Brown, who is writing a book on alternative medicine, says, "Ultimately, the scientific world is based on doubt, and the spiritual world is based on faith. And Chopra must reconcile the two."

Wherever the non-instrumental war, conflict, or skiz-



Bill Zehme



Nicholas Pegg



Gregory Jaynes



David Noonan

mo explosions, you can be sure that Jimmy Carter will be on a plane, carrying an olive branch. This month, Carter may finally be properly rewarded for all his efforts if the Nobel committee hands him the peace prize ("Eyes on the Prize," page 126). Contributing editor **Gregory Jaynes**, who occasionally covered the Carter White House as a reporter for *The Atlanta Constitution*, says that the president is much the same man he was twenty-five years ago. "The remarkable thing about him is that I don't think he's changed in twenty years," he says. As for the peace candidate's good will toward intra-personal, Jaynes says, "The most important thing in the world to Jimmy Carter is, How can I be a better person? And as for what you think of him, he could give a happy day."

The novelist **Mark Helprin** makes his fiction debut in *Esquire* with a short story—which will be included in a forthcoming collection—about a female trench soldier in the days before the Yom Kippur war. Helprin, who served in the Israeli air force and infantry, says that "Last Time with the Amateurs" (page 114) represents his return to writing about the country and also about women. "These days, however, because of ideology, every time you write about

a woman or from the point of view of a woman, there are always people looking for imperfections or mistakes. So I just operate under the rules that were in place before all this ideology." Helprin is the author of *A Soldier of the Great War*, *Winter's Tale*, and, most recently, *Memor from Amputee One* (Harcourt Brace). He is at work on a nonfiction book about national security.

Longtime *Esquire* contributor **David Noonan** witnessed several breast surgeries as part of his research for this month's Guide, "Having a Heart Attack" (page 145). "You get a different appreciation of how remarkable the body is," says Noonan, author of *Never*, a book about brain surgery, and the novel *Memories of a Caddy*. Noonan, who has a racing pulse rate of about sixty-five, says he did not change his ideology because of the article, but it did give him occasional chest pains. "My main rule here," he says, "is sincerity. But I do play golf—or at least write about it." ■

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Reality Check

Hypnosis

Something Borrowed, Something Blue Suede

A MAJOR BRIDAL magazine (which shall remain nameless) recently conducted a survey of its readers, asking them (i) if you could have any individual, living or dead, attend your wedding, who would it be? and (ii) if you could have any wedding or music group, past or present, perform at your wedding, which would it be?

The results, which the magazine decided not to publish, were surprising—if not a bit embarrassing—because the same individual placed first in both categories: **Elvis**. In the “guest” category, the King beat out the **Peps**, who rose out **first** in number three (*Exquisite dilemma* 1). Do you ask either one of these two to perform the ceremony? Rounding out the top ten: **Ornith**.

Would you want **Ann** to throw rice at you?

Watney came in fourth (though don't invite her and Elvis if there's a buffet). Next were **Frank Sinatra**, **Elvis Costello**, **Barryman Ford**, **John F. Kennedy** (keep him and **Seneca** away from the bridesmaids), **David Letterman**, and, in tenth place, **Prisoners Blues**.

Most requested music, in reverse order: **Watney Sinatra** placed tenth, right behind **Boyz II Men**, **James Taylor** was the eighth most requested, then **Barry Manilow Jr.**, **Guns N' Roses**, **Keith Van Horn**, and **Sinatra**. **The Beatles** ranked third (*Exquisite dilemma* 1). Do you have to invite **Tina**? And for those who want great sex on their wedding night, number two was **Kenny G**. Guess **Seneca** was booked.

Main

The Woman Who Loved Men

Frances Lear sure does like those blue-collar guys. The woman who received a fubbinggust 200 million divorce settlements from her husband, television producer **Norman Lear**, surprised the publishing world a while back when she locked her former chauffeur, Peter Foley, way upstairs to man **Lear's** hot new-deliect magazine for women of a certain

age. But the relationship soon became personal—and tumultuous. So Lear hired Michael Phillips, a professional bodyguard, to watch over her. Once her perceived threat of bodily harm passed, however, Lear had grown so attached to Phillips that she hired him to help out on her video and



Is there a dental plan?

television advertisements (Their latest project is, appropriately enough, a video on women and work.) Can a television copman be her behind?

Random

Wanna Buy Bridges?

I N THE beginning, there was **The Bridge of Madison County**. And it was musicbox. Then came the CD, **The Bridge of Madison County**. Then the movie. Then a book about the making of the movie. Then there was the goldenrod perfume. ("Ooh, Helms, you know how I got when you wear **Bridge**...") Now, and that is probably not the end of the line, there are not one but two **Bridge** cook-

books in the world: **Chomoor House**, a subsidiary of **Time Warner**, is appealing to the lusty housewives who fell for **Robert James Waller's** book by bringing out **The Recipe of Madison County**. But when the editors at **Good Publishing** learned that the recipe was from the catering crew on the set of the **Clam** **Eastern** **Meryl Streep** coadjutor they kept into action and secured the rights to

what they claim are the authentic **Madison County** recipes, including such mouthwatering dishes as **Taco Soup** and **Snowball Surprise**. "We're on the high road," boasts **Carol Publishing's** **Stacey Schaefer**. "These are recipes from the God-fearing members of **Madison County's** **St. Joseph's Catholic Church**." Anyone feel like leaving from a bridge in **Madison County**? ■

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Where it all began Robert Kincaid wrote here.



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EDITED BY ANITA LECLERC



The Un-Harley

IN 1975, BUILDERS knocked down the Triumph motorcycle factory near Coventry, England, to make way for a public housing project. It seemed a sad end for the great name whose triangular logo had designed some of the world's finest motorcycles since the 1937 introduction of the Speed Twin, the fastest and most stable bike of its day. Brando rode one in *The Wild One*; James Dean and Bob Dylan favored Triumphs; and Elvis owned a brother's custom. But soon, more powerful and less expensive Japanese bikes drove the British Triumph, like the American Harley, to the edge of extinction.

Now, thanks to an infusion of entrepreneurial capital injected by its legend, Triumph is back. Its new factory appeared almost overnight, like an alien crop circle, in the green fields of Hinckley, Leicestershire, and it has reentered the American market with a new-model lineup. The most dramatic of these is the retro-infused Thunderbird, a three-cylinder bike for less than \$8,000, which Triumph is offering as the "un-Harley."

Triumph has no black-tie tie-up call named for it, no special relationship with a licensed Warner Bros. custom chameleon. The T-bird wears no sleek body panels in neon colors, assumes no Darth Vader helmet shapes. Instead, it has traditional shrouded "pushover" exhausts and the trademark "batwing" grille on its gas tank. The effect is less hell's angel than heaven's: a classic given a new lease on life—nostalgia come down to earth.

—PHIL PAYTON

The return of the wild one: One of only twenty-five limited-edition Triumph Thunderbirds headed for our shores this year.

PHOTO: MIKE GREGG



TELEVISION

Braugher's Hour

TELEVISION HAS NEVER SEEN a character like *Hammer's* Detective Frank Pembleton, not a better actor than the man who plays him. That Andre Braugher wasn't nominated for an Emmy this year just embarrasses the Emmys.

On TV, longevity has always called for Kirby Gray like Colombo and Roddenberry. But Pembleton, Braugher's intense, controlled, fiercely intelligent, sure of himself in a not very endearing way. He treats affability as the overused versus most grown-ups know it is.

To meet Braugher is to recognize the force behind Pembleton's steely persona and the respect he commands. On a sweltering Saturday afternoon in Baltimore, he's in a jacket and Emmy kneecap tie. He'll tell a magazine it won't be doing a story about him if it means on photographing him at home (although he does divulge that the actress who plays his wife on the show, Amy Brenneman, is, in fact, his wife). Asked—by someone who knows Baltimore—where he lives while filming, he says, "Nearby." No, what neighborhood? "Nearby." He's friendly, but he disdains false intimacy.

Braugher was raised in Chicago but went out to Stanford to do mechanical engineering. Next thing he knows, he was telling his father, a heavy-machinery operator, that he was playing *Christmas* as a production of Hamlet and showing his major to drama. That eventually came around. Braugher has since played *Macbeth*, *Jag*, Jackie Robinson, and, in *Glee*, a late Negro living in Civil War Boston. Last month, he starred in *The Talented Mr. Ripley* on HBO, and later this year, he'll play an on-top PM in *Presidential*.

Braugher wanted to play Pembleton from his first look at a script. "I couldn't discover his race," he says. "Usually, when the character is an African-American, he's down on his or cool or unrelentant or speaks in some kind of street lingo. Or he's a madman or some insane figure, like a police commissioner. And I saw the potential for this character, this master of his craft."

It is deemed to play only machines and de-manding roles? "I'd like to try those Dumb and Dumber parts," Braugher says, without visible sarcasm, "but they don't do it for me."

—JAMES MALLONOWSKI

My touch with Andre: The man behind Detective Pembleton doesn't waste words.

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A Kink's Konfession

In 1964, the Kinks, a quartet of globe from the gritty, anonymous burbs of north London, crashed their way to the top of the Pop charts with a rag matronage of inspired rock primitivism, "You Really Got Me," and led the road. Ray Davies, another art-school music metamorphosed into rock 'n' roll butteeriffy, was their idiosyncratic ideologist and poet laureate. Now, more than a few speed

bumps later, Davies has quipped about the half-century mark, with plenty of that time scammed in pieces on the road behind him.

What does he do? Well, Davies was always the most worldly of the British Invasion. So he conceals an extraordinary "unauthorized autobiography," *X-Ray (Chameleon Press)*—a dystopian, dystopic novel in which, sometime after the millennium, a faintly bewitched scold

of a totalitarian conglomerate intervenes and acquiesces into the life of one Ray Davies, unapologetically an SOB. Davies has the good manners to inform us, by this very conceit, that he's no Augustine, no Rousseau—he's a Biter, and more than a bit wonk. Of course, he's bloody fabulous, too, writing grizzled biographies with a gutter-pipe's lust for life—he's Alie in the sky with diamonds. And the



Life on the road: The novelization

very subjective recounting of his lonely battle to get "You Really Got Me" right goes straight into the canon of rock 'n' roll mythology.

Esky's True Paternity

ON THE BEELS OF *It Wasn't Pretty, Folks, But Dad's Mr. Xmas Tree* (Kismet), Carol Pilgreen's celebration of Empire in the 1960s (see our August 1996 issue), comes Hugh Merrill's *Esley: The Early Years at Empire* (Kismet), which retraces our past from the literary 1920s to the conspiracy battles of the 1940s with associated postmodernist general. Along the way, Merrill ascribes some unexpected talents: for example, that our

subject, Esley—while fervently involved in this by then, Herman for cover photo—sprang first from the pen of William Faulkner.

E. Simon Campbell. As such, Esley belongs to the great American pop-cultural genre of racial mystery, of hoodlum and whetstone. Esley was the hyperdramatic homosexual who presided over the ghastly world conjured in the pages of *Empire*—a world that his African-American creator was too often barred from. Esley's girlfriend, legendary bandster and officer Arnold Fitzgerald, confessed Campbell's work, and Esley's named it as every scene until the cartoonist's death in 1971. After 1967, though, Campbell sent his work from Switzerland, writing dryly, "But here... I can walk into any joint I want to, and nobody starts looking at it like they're thinking, 'Och, there's a nigger in here.'"

The early years: Esley in 1930



Esley's finest hour: An original lobby card, circa 1937

Silent Centenary

BETTER REASON is the silent-screen artist whose reputation in the face of his every case struck goes very poor deal, well into the millions. It turns out that little Esley ought to be the poster boy of American comedy. That "just stone face" masked and presented a battered inner child. His body shimmering shush, both on and offstage, at the hands of his vengeful father is a

continued in excruciating detail in Menon Meade's espionage account of his mysterious and disorderly life (HyperCollins), out on what would be his hundredth birthday, October 4. But the finest centenary celebration is Kimo on Video's release of more than eighteen hours of Kironama in three boxed sets, including his most legendary features and a generous selection of his scarce and hilarious two-reel shorts. *W*



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—Don Braaford, Aberdeen, ME

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TECH

Cutting Cable Loose

On December 15, 1993, an *America* socket named off from French Guiana, carrying into orbit the first of three direct broadcast satellites. Now parked above us degrees west longitude, a line running roughly from Midland, Texas, to Miami, North Dakota, these satellites beam 125 channels of digital television to homes with eighteen-inch Digital Satellite System dish antennas and receivers from RCA and Sony.

Impressed by the sharp picture and fed up with local cable service, video addicts

are spring more and more DBS antennas heavenward. By the end of the year, almost a million people will be pulling down movies, special sports packages, and cable channels from on high. Prices of DBS dishes have fallen from \$500 to as low as \$100, and sales are expected to double that year.

For now, there are two satellite subscription services. United States Satellite Broadcasting and DirecTV, which bundle their programming off the satellites to your dish from low-cost studios in such remote locales as Castle Rock, Colorado, then issue monthly bills like a cable company. They carry films that arrive almost on demand (shows begin on the half hour) and a range of programming at prices comparable to cable—from 50¢ to 25¢ a month, depending on the services you want. But many owners swear by the crisp digital-audio channels alone, twenty-eight of them, without ads, from jazz to rap. It's Radio Free Clear Space.

Informal surveys suggest that some buyers of DBS are reformed big dish owners. Now that many channels are scrambled, they're trading in the black-market decoder boxes they use to swap HBO or Showtime for legitimate service—and dumping their big ugly aerial dishes in the process. But for others, the sleek little dish seems to be a different kind of symbol. Even more than the big one before it, it seems to make

Local color: The only glitch attending the arrival of the little dishes is that they won't receive local channels with the murder and mayhem of evening news. For that, *Earth Technologies'* TV36 amplified antenna proves a handy substitute for your DBS dish.

people feel powerful and independent, cut loose from the grid and the grid. The dish is as powerful as soon as its way at the rancher's lonely woodland outland against the western horizon.

And dish/becomes common such as Sony's SPS-AD1 can also be hooked up to your computer and in fashion will receive computer data and capture images and video clips. Soon, DirecTV will bring you the Internet from space as well. Get ready for the information skyway.

—PAUL PATTON

How to Beam Yourself Up

You can install a DBS dish yourself anywhere with a clear line of sight north to the satellites, but most users pay \$100 or so to avoid the hassles of masonry drilling, cable running, and signal locking. Sony's LBS Digital Satellite simplifies the process, but hooking up a mini-dish is a far cry from hooking up a TCR. In addition to getting the dish wired to a receiver aimed to your TV, you will need to install a hub in your phone line for pay-per-view authentication and billing. Better with the local electronic distributor into a few guided installations when you buy the system.



Free space: Sony's SPS-AD1 dish/receiver (\$750)—a basic cutting-edge DBS system.



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RESTAURANTS

John Mariani

A New Look at Lutèce

When I heard the news that Lutèce, New York's most venerable French restaurant, had been sold to a sprawling corporation called Ark Restaurants, known more for its family-style food houses than for its fine dining, I could imagine only the worst. They'd put in a pizza oven and a salad bar, fire the maitre-d's and waiters and hire waitresses who look like Drew Barrymore, dress them in jeans and tory T-shirts with Eiffel Towers on them, and start selling signature wineglasses and ashtrays at a gift shop where the little ones had used to be. Ark's president, Michael Winston, has, after all, announced that he will license the name "Lutèce" and may open branches of the restaurant in cities as far-flung as Las Vegas and Tokyo.

The sale was not unexpected. André Solner, Lutèce's chef for thirty-four years, is now sixty-two and says his legs aren't what they used to be. He and his wife, Simone, gave Lutèce its venerable style, its quiche and omelette menu. Even those who oohed about his understated menu and unfussy decor had to admit that no one did fine gastronomy, Alsatian art, roast chicken, or spring lamb better than he did.

So when Solner passed



Fresh faces: Janet Carr and Eberhard Müller, the new "maitre d'hôtel" for dinner.

the whip to Eberhard Müller, formerly the executive chef at Le Bernardin, those who loved the old Lutèce were wary of what



Still golden: Grilled squid with morel mushrooms.

might become of the new. With several roads under my belt, I can imagine the likes of regulars and maitre d's who have never been there to book a table immediately. Lutèce is as good as everybody's house.

Now when you arrive at the three-story townhouse at 345 East 57th Street, you're greeted by Janet Carr (the new maitre d'hôtel) in Washington, whose sophistication and wit have clearly originated a staff that had, quite honestly, become complacent over the years. As I write, the hospitable decor is being altered without compromising the golden charm of the original or the provincial formality of the upstairs rooms. Commensurate with its rise, the recently shored-up Lutèce has been restored to prominence by Carr and again ends with the best in the city.

Slowly, carefully, and with tremendous respect for Solner's spirit, Müller has added newer, lighter dishes,

with an emphasis on seafood. The purity of flavors in his poached halibut in chow broth, his salad of fresh olives barely glossed with truffle vinaigrette, and his sautéed black bass with saffron-mustard sauce fit perfectly with such beloved classics as veal potage, impeccably grilled squid with wild mushrooms, and luscious rack of lamb in natural juices so clear and deeply flavorful that you would think Solner was still back there overseeing the kitchen.

Lutèce has also acquired its first true pastry chef, David Cernuschi, who also understands that flavor, not flashiness, is key to the Lutèce legacy. His banana phillo with custard ice cream is passion-fruit sauce and his strawberry-rhubarb pie with strawberry ice cream are simply delicious.

Those who revered Solner may be sad to find him gone. But no one with an open mind and good taste can be anything but glad-ened by the youth and vigor of the new Lutèce as it heads, resolutely, into the next millennium. Lutèce, once again, has legs.

STELAN ARVEDSON

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Baja on the rocks: Carling through blue water in search of marlin, left, postcard at Hotel Palmita

TRAVEL

Cool in Cabo

You're sure to think it's down there. Whizzing cool as a surfer, on the scorching far end of the West Coast. The perfect Los Cabos villa. White-washed walls, red-tile roof, blue views of the Pacific framed in rugged bougainvillea. Someone's handing you an acid drink in a turquoise glass, serving you local lobster with some kind of mango-lime sauce. A true Mexican primitive. Live-out resort. You can see it, but don't want? Lucky for you, it does.

Laid out on its own three-thousand-acre Baja headland, Hotel Palmita looks at first like some kind of Spanish mission settlement. Palms and other irrigated greenery disconnect it from the surrounding desolation. You are, after all, but a lizard's leap from the Tropics of Cancer.

Overhead fans keep the air moving near the lobby. The terracotta floor lowers your temperature further, and the open step-down, shower on hand-painted Mexican tile does the rest. Not that you've suffered much so far. There was the usual flight stress, then about four seconds of full-force Cabo heat before Juan Carlos appeared in summer whites and ushered you into an air-conditioned room appointed with a cooler full of acid lime.

Twenty minutes later, you step into the hotel's pretty lobby, and a woman in a lacy-shouldered Mexican blouse prescribes you a tall, frothy glass of fresh tropical-fruit juice. Her skin gleams like new copper. Everyone's done but yours, which is, you note, roughly the shade of the interior of a bagel.

Fortunately, the heart of

stretches out like a long white slab. You arrange your now-translucent body upon it with a convalescent's solerity. You last five minutes. That last. And besides, it's coastal here.

A quick transfer rewards you with vital information: The soul of Palmita is its bar, which might be the most perfect bar in the known universe—and not just because its exquisite *pinta colada fresco* and margaritas make roadside versions taste like *Five-Ten* juice, but because of its location. Since the Palmita is situated on Baja's lower east coast, as far as high above the lapis sweep of the Sea of Cortez, whose jack-buzzing surf sounds as if a thousand Mexican marriages were about to stampede your gazebo, which is also perfect. A merciful wind rises in off the water through the huge whale arches that pass for walls at Hotel Palmita.

You picture yourself deep-sea fishing off the stern of one of Palmita's fleet of high bridge boats, a blue sea-

lin out-walking in the distance. This mission is so formed, of course. You eat yourself playing the night-south hole at Cabo del Sol, Palmita's new Jack Nicklaus-designed seaside course. You know you will scrold and whale-watch and play tennis and shop in the fine little queer town of San José del Cabo, then return to paradise of Palmita's Mexican haute cuisine under the big moon. But what you will have to find out is how many sick days "never sunrise" will get you if you spend too many hours on the beach just before you're scheduled to head back home.

—JESSICA MAXWELL

Practicalities

Los Cabos is eight hundred miles south of San Diego. Direct flights are available from Seattle, San Francisco, Los Angeles, Phoenix, Denver, and Houston, as well as from San Diego. For reservations at Palmita, call 606-672-2226.



Beauty: Palmita's perils



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Campaignland, USA



Twins In '96, the Jackson and Perot missions could be almost identical.

THE TWO-MAN SYSTEM (left-right) Succeeded after a short-year chase, controversial advisers. Motivated by countless political consultants and educated voters, who have all been through the hell and remain hopeful for a resurrection. Survived by independent candidates Ross Perot and Jesse Jackson. In lieu of flowers, please send cash contributions to Bill Clinton and Bob Dole.

SO SAD, REALLY. And so alone in his last days; all those who have loved it are long dead themselves. So few mourners, so little sentiment. Ross Perot, in fact, is planning to tap-dance on its grave by running for president again next year. And if Perot dances, Jesse Jackson will be right behind him with his own delicate soft-shoe, a Rainbow Coalition fourth party.

It is easy to ridicule the benten rover due to Perot's own, due timing, the pious self-congratulation and the lovely paranoid streak. Taking cheap shots at Perot has become a lazy media sport, like lampooning Kato Kaelin. Give the guy a break. After four days wandering amid the bizarre spectacle of the first United We Stand America powwow in Dallas, I realized that the bumperless billionaire may, on balance, be a force for good rather than evil. Of course, Perot shouldn't ever be president. But as a protest candidate, Daddy Warbucks may still prove to be the catalyst America

needs to finally smack out the mablen of big-money politics. There may yet be a method to his megalomania. The angry, none-of-the-above voter, the Perot voter, has become a cliché, but something is terribly wrong when 50 percent of those surveyed in a recent CBS-New York Times poll can't find anyone in public life to admire.

More than a year before the election, we are already mulling at the thought of a two-party campaign that will likely pose the choice between the self-paying Bill Clinton and the wingnut Bob Dole. A second term for Clinton would be a symbol of hype over experience. Electing Dole would be like pushing the pause button on your VCR; you could wonder off for four years secure in the knowledge that nothing much will change.

As the polls now suggest, Clinton might beat Dole in a two-way race. But a Perot candidacy increases the odds of a second term for Clinton, simply because Perot drains far more votes from the Republicans. Longtime GOP operative Roger Stone, who is now engaged in the strange cause

of Arlen Specter, succinctly explained why the entire Republican presidential field obediently avoids the pilgrimage to Dallas: "No matter who you are as a Republican, our party goal is to keep Ross Perot out of the 1996 presidential race."

In a passionate speech to the conference, Jackson, who remains the best center in public life, described the two parties as "top-locked," not gridlocked. But in a strange symbiosis, Jackson and Perot have become locked as well, much like a field entry in a personality track. Jackson, as his top advisers strongly suggested, will not go chasing nachos with a quiescent third-party campaign if his opponent will single-handedly cost Clinton the election. But if Perot runs, now that's a horse of a different color. I talked with Jackson for fifteen minutes as he waited to bid farewell to "Booker Perot." I was struck by how palpably Jackson pined for that brief, shining moment in 1995 when he was winning popular voter support from bankrupt Iowa farmers and laid-off Michigan auto-workers. Jackson talks as if his disappointment with Clinton is permanent. "Clinton lacks the sword,"

Newly & the Blewmark

The GOP's message for Ross Perot—please don't run.



OUR MAN IN THE WHITE HOUSE

Jackson declines. *Congrat! "No!"* Jackson says softly. "Congrat!"

During Perot's momentous resignation, I sat down for dinner with a few of his political confidants. None of them claimed to know Perot's mind, but collectively they sketched out the scenarios they believed he is following.

Perot goes together has August, emphasizing partly to deny talk of a permanent third party. Perot's dirty little secret is that he doesn't mind being the standard bearer, but he is not a party builder, so many extra seats is just a slogan as so many brains and neckties left on the Dallas Convention Center floor. Of course, you can't blame Perot for being wary of finding himself on the same ticket with some Senate candidate in Oklahoma who knows the name of the Jewish banker from the Tri lateral Commission who ordered the hit on Vince Foster.

But having marginalized a third party movement, Perot then reversed field and set out the rationale for another independent candidacy. In a provoca-

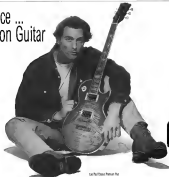
tive farewell speech in Dallas, Perot riddled off a series of laudable proposals to ban PAC spending, curbed the influence of lobbyists, and eliminate the ridiculous "soft money" that subsidizes both parties. This new Perot agenda starts about as much chance for congressional passage as Bob Packwood does of being chosen to own the losing booth at an Oregon county fair. It was a clever twofold Perot staked out the moral high ground and set up a test that the bipartisan spends system is certain to fail.

More than two decades after the Watergate reforms, the petty corruptions of political fundraising have almost brought us back to the era when Richard Nixon mentioned off-and-on-again to the highest bidder. The only real difference is inflation. In 1974, a \$200,000 check to CRISP might get you the embassy in Copenhagen. These days, a similar check to the Democratic National Committee puts you on the waiting list for a five-day trade mission with Commerce secretary Ron Brown. Who knows better than the belated fat cat the horrors of the declining dollar?

Not having to worry about money, Perot will wait to announce until after the Republicans go through their fiscal-cold pressures. And, of course, it helps that he has no more dangerous subviral to be insured during the coming election cycle. You can never tell when those Republican big squads will steal the presidential election.

FOR YEARS, I have been obsessed by a simple reform that would restore rationality, if not dignity, to the political process. Why in this era of satellite uplinks do presidential contenders still have to fly mostly around the country? After all, flesh-and-blood voters have been reduced to comic bookings for TV ads and sound bites on the nightly news. Let's erect a theme park somewhere convenient and call it Campground. Think of an old-time Hollywood lot. Here would be every scenic backdrop a media adviser could create. "Real people" could walk down Main Street and see Bob Dole rambling in a small town parlor. Main Street, of course, would need a McDonald's, where

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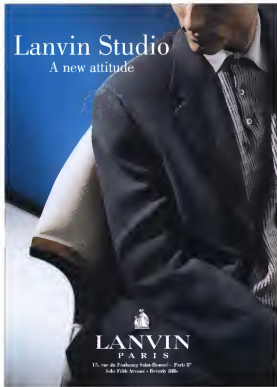
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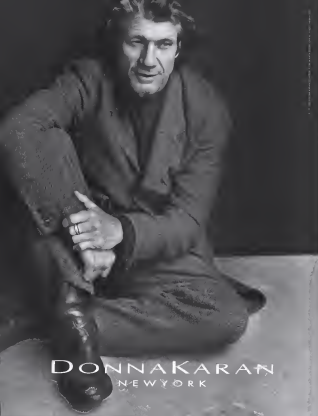
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DONNA KARAN
NEW YORK

THE SPORTING LIFE

Mike Lupica

The Marino Zone

One game. Two minutes left. Who would *you* want to have the ball?

IT IS THE TUESDAY after the Miami Dolphins' first exhibition game at their practice facility across from the Rolling Hills country club in Davie, Florida. Hurricane Erin has just blown through the week before but has taken none of the August heat with her. By mid-morning, the temperature on the field is in the mid-80s, but it feels even hotter than that, and this is only the first session of the day for Dan Marino and the Dolphins. There is still some work to be done before lunch, and Don Shula wants to have his offense run a two-minute drill that may mean something in December, or perhaps January.

Shula wants to go with one of the quarterbacks who will back up Marino this season, either Dennis Kasper or Doug Pederson or Dan McGwire, brother of the Oakland A's first baseman Mark McGwire. After all the years they have been together, Shula does not need to see anything from Marino on a Tuesday morning in August. He has already seen it all.

But right now, Shula tells Marino to take a seat while he decides which of his backups gets the ball. No one is worrying about the Dolphins being two runs away from the playoffs or even the Super Bowl. All they can think about is that they are two minutes away from an air-conditioned locker room.

Marino doesn't go off and sit as down. Instead, he taps Shula on the shoulder. "Let me," he says.

"I was thinking about leaving one of the other guys work," Shula says.

Marino grins.

"Give me the ball," he says. "Please."

Shula shakes his head, then gives back to Marino. And goes up. When Dan Marino wants to rehearse a bit more, you let him go.

Don Marino will be thirty-four in a few weeks, and that is his second season after surgery to repair a torn Achilles tendon that has made his right calf permanently numb. He still walks with a limp and probably always will, but there

are now receivers whose timing and habits he has to learn. Marino has reached the point at which he appreciates all the days of his career—even the dog days. He tries to make every training count.

On two minutes.

Really, though Dan Marino has this extraordinary past as a quarterback, he has always been even better at imagining the future. He can imagine that these are the last two minutes to win the Super Bowl; he still has never won. So he gets behind his center at 11:30 in the morning in Davie and goes to work. He is playing against his own defense, but now the ball is in the air, and the Dolphins offense is going down the field. It is as if a cool breeze blows through everything suddenly.

"I tell people all the time," Don Shula says. "Dan Marino even makes practice exciting."

WHEN DAN MARINO walked into his first

Dolphins training camp in 1983, he showed an ability to pass the football that will have him breaking the quarterback record of consecutive this season (most career touchdowns: passes, most yards, most points, most completions). All of them from Pittsburgh's Going into this season, Marino had 126 career touchdowns, passes, completions, yards, points, completions. Tarkenton at just a few Sundays ahead at 341. Marino had 45,073 career yards, Tarkenton passed for 40,003. Marino had 6,543 completions, Tarkenton, 5,657. Marino, 3,654 completions. Tarkenton, 3,646. So they are very close in numbers except for one. Tarkenton put up those statistics across eighteen seasons. That is Marino's nineteenth season for number 11.

"It would be such a wonderful thing if we could go back to the Super Bowl in the year when Danny breaks all the records," Shula said to me in Davie.

Both Shula and Marino could use another trip



Dan of Steel: Superman in search of a Super Bowl



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THE SPORTING LIFE

final minutes. He moved the Dolphins downfield, but a long pass fell incomplete, and Pete Stoyanovich's field goal to win would have to be from forty-eight yards away. With six seconds to go, the Dolphins lined up and Stoyanovich snarled wide right. The Chargers were 12-10. They crinkled up in the Super Bowl at Joe Robbie. The dream ending that Marino had imagined, the dream game that he has yet to play and win, was put off for another season.

"I think about that game all the time," Marino says in the lounge. "I think about how the game could have been different if I'd hit that pass [to wide receiver Mike Williams inside the Chargers' end] right before the end. I wonder how things could have been different if I could've just gotten Pete on yards closer, even five yards closer."

His veins trail off, buried now underneath the room from a video game one of his teammates is playing in a corner. Across the room, another teammate watches a music video. In the moments between practice sessions that get the Dolphins ready for their first game in September, Dan Marino is back in the last minute of a game played in January. Sometimes the last two minutes do not work out, even for Dan Marino.

I ask whether he will finally let go of that game. Marino gives a good long look, his blue eyes studying everything the way they would a defense, and he finally says, "I haven't let go."

He shifts slightly in his seat. Marino is a big man, six-foot and nearly 300 pounds. From behind, you could make him out to be a tight end.

"I'll just be driving along with my wife in the car," he continues, "and we'll stop at a light, and she'll say, 'Who you talking to there, guy?' And I'll be talking to myself, replaying that game." Marino sighs and says, "That was one of the bad ones."

"A tough, tough loss," Don Shula said in his office before Marino showed up. "We really were building toward playing this Super Bowl game at home. Then to see it come apart the way it did, well, that was a very unpleasant loss for all of us. But I think I felt worse for Dan."

Shula got up from behind his desk and stared out at the field. Silhouetted against the window, he was still ruckered and barrel-chested, still Shula.

"It makes me all want that season even more," Shula said finally.

Everyone knew that either the 49ers or the Cowboys would come into the last Super Bowl a prohibitive favorite. But there was a feeling this if the Dolphins—come with that questionable defense—could get to the game, Marino would think of something, would at least give them a puncher's chance. And the week before the Dolphins-Chargers game, Marino had beaten Montana and the Chiefs in what was an unforgettable quarterback duel for a half.

The game was at Joe Robbie on a Saturday afternoon, and there were already stories that if the Chiefs lost, this would be the great Montana's last game.

More than that, it was Marino versus Montana. They had met before, in 1975, Super Bowl XIX at Stanford Stadium in Palo Alto, Montana's backyard. Marino was just a kid then, in his second year, but he had thrown forty-eight touchdown passes that season, an

all-time record. Only this might have been the best 49ers team out of their five Super Bowl-winning teams. They came into the game 17-1 and would end up trouncing the Dolphins, 31-16.

"I thought I'd be back plenty of times," Marino has said more than once over the years. Maybe there would even be more postseason matches with Montana. Only it did not work out that way. Now there was just this opening round playoff game at Joe Robbie, at the end of Montana's storied career.

And for the first half, the position of quarterback, on both sides of the ball, was played as brilliantly as it can be played. There have been other famous quarterback duels in history. There was a memorable game at Shea Stadium, Joe Montana versus John Elway, when both were passed for about a million yards. Marino and Montana are better quarterbacks than Montana and Elway.

The score at halftime said it all: 17-17. Montana was twelve for fifteen,

It climbed
up there by itself.

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191 yards, two touchdowns. Marino was famous for inches, 10 yards, one touchdown. Five incompletions between them for the half. It reached the point at Joe Robbie—and it was in the stands—when an incompleting was the most startling part of this game. Montana would take the Chuck down the field, and Marino would get the ball back and take the Dolphins down. It was an elegant game of cat-and-mouse.

"I was afraid to miss," Marino says all these months later, "because it sure didn't look as if Joe was going to."

Always in sports, the debate about the best ever to play a game, or a position, comes down to this: How much weight do you give rules? I believe you give a lot. I love Marino and will root for him hard this season, but if you give me one quarterback for the championship of all time, hell, for the future of the world itself, I'll take Montana.

Montana won 4-0 in Super Bowls, never threw an interception in any of the games, and was voted MVP three times. Marino was league MVP once and has never won. If he goes his whole career and does not win the Super Bowl, he will go in with Ted Williams, I think, as the biggest American professional athletes to have not won a title in a team sport.

Later in the day I ask Marino who the best quarterback of them all is, and he smiles and says, "The always believed the real deal is just to be at the debate." On that day at Joe Robbie last December, the debate was conducted on the field. Marino was not all of what he'd once been, because the Achilles-tendon injury stole something from him, especially his legendary quickness in the pocket. Montana was thirty-eight years old and had been hurt on and off for years.

But they had plenty left for this one game, the kind of game they were supposed to play every January but did not. The Dolphins' defense took charge in the second half and won. The game ended with Montana, two more points behind, trying to put the ball on the end zone one final time. Not on this Sunday Montana walked off the field and announced his retirement: a couple of months later. Someone it seemed fitting that if he could not go out with one more Super Bowl, at least he could go out against the great Marino—the other half of the great quarterback debate.

THE SPORTING LIFE

"Debate like that are for the humans to worry about," Shula says. "I've seen every game he's ever played. And I know that every game he ever played, he did everything he could."

So I ask Shula—who has won more games than any coach in professional history—which quarterback he would choose for the one game that would decide the championship of all time, the future of the world itself.

Without hesitating, Shula turns and says, "I'd go for Danney. And then hope that the game comes down to the last two minutes and Danney has the ball."

In the players' lounge, seven months after the game against Montana, I ask Marino if he felt sorry for Montana at the end, watching him take his man down the field one last time with no chance to win.

Marino shakes his head. "No, I didn't feel sorry," he says. "It's part of the game. I've been there enough times myself."

"I remember one time, we were losing to the Bills [49-10] in the AFC championship game. Coach asked me if I wanted to come out. I told him no. I said, 'I came that far, I'm going to finish.' You might as well keep playing. Where the hell else are you going to go?"

I say to Marino, "What about watching Montana at the very end?" "I thought that I didn't want that day to come for me anymore soon," Marino says quietly. He starts to count off the seasons he believes he has left on his huge right hand. "Ten thirty-four this year I'll be thirty-five for the 46 season, thirty-six in '93, thirty-seven in '94."

Now he smiles brilliantly. It is as if a light that went out when he was talking about the loss to the Chargers had suddenly come back on.

"I might play until the end of the century," Dan Marino says. "What do you think about that?"

I tell him it is a splendid idea. Nothing to debate them at all. ■

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down there."

"Hey, hello
down there."

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Christopher Byron

The Midas Strategy

How I discovered a way to heat the pants off Wall Street—without insider information

MY FRIEND HARRY looked at me as if I were a fool. "How many people have you told about this?" he wanted to know. If I'd just keep my mouth shut, he said, we'd both make a lot of money. He leaned across the table and lowered his eyeglasses. "I mean it," he said. "A lot of money."

Here was the plan: Harry would raise 50 million from some guy he knew in the Persian Gulf, and we'd start our own little hedge fund based on my idea. Then we'd move to New York, do like John Templeton and run it from down there. Better, because after like a couple of low-ten George H. W. Bushes.

But that's not how it worked out. It all began one night when I scribbled on this strange and flakey track while writing on my computer. It's a way that everyday investors can beat the pants off most of the Wall Street by exploiting a totally new mutual fund investment strategy—one that not only promises to produce spectacular double-digit returns for years on end but, by its very nature, can best be exploited only by small investors.

Look at the graph along the bottom of these pages and you'll see what I mean: It is a timeline showing two decades of performance for stocks, bonds, yen, and gold—all set against an investing strategy that, as far as I can determine, no one has ever conjured before. If the strategy had been diligently followed, it would have beaten the Dow (which dividends converted about as often as not). But when the Dow was the winner, it usually triumphed by only a few percentage points. By contrast, when the strategy won, it generally beat the Dow by a huge margin. The strategy did particularly well in the kind of stagflation or weak phase many investors fear for the stock market is now entering.

On Wall Street, they call for stocks like that—only here's the beauty of it. This is a game the big boys can't play. It's a strategy for individuals—for anyone, with a tax-deferred Keogh, IRA, or SEP account who wants to make it grow.

Like me. Here I was, totally into middle age, with little but a Keogh account that squandered along with underwhelming single-digit returns year in and year out. How could I play catch-up? Was an "aggressive growth" mutual fund the answer? Mutual funds, which collectively control more than \$1 trillion in assets, are meant, after all, to be the average American Joe's way of saving for the future. In less than twenty years, the fund business has moved from irrelevance to become a dominant force in American finance—with assets approaching the size of the country's FOMC-owned banks. And new funds keep multiplying like bacteria in a petri dish.

What was the message in the mutual-fund boom? If America is in long-term decline, as some like Ed

weird outlook assure us is the case, with growth slowing and living standards about to sink, why are so many people investing in funds? And what do they think they can get from a mutual fund that they can't get on their own? One question led to another, and before I knew it, I'd forgotten what had originally led me to the subject—the search for a way to ramp up my Keogh—and was immersed in writing a story about the field.

From these very beginnings in the 1950s, mutual funds have evolved themselves as a way for individuals to get professional long-term subjugation of their money for a fairly modest fee. At latest count, more than thirty-eight million Americans—some 5 percent of the nation's families—own shares in one mutual fund or another. But why? Going professional money management is great if the managers can do better than you can, yet study also shows that in the aggregate, mutual funds perform no better (or worse) than the stock market as a whole. The Efficient Market Theory made famous by Burton Malkin's *Random Walk* Down Wall Street holds that everything that can possibly be known about any stock is already reflected in its price—so what's to be gained by paying a fee to some money manager to buy stocks that are already fairly valued?

The fact is, people invest in mutual funds because it's easy, because even the average return is better than what you get in a bank, and be-

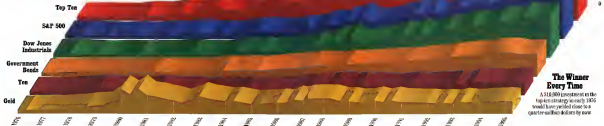
cause they have the same desire as people who go to Las Vegas (well, almost). They hope to pick a winner.

For every winner, though, there are hundreds of losers, to say nothing of flakiness in the pan performance that soon sinks from view. For that reason, the SEC requires every fund offering shares to the public to include—in bold black letters across the front of the prospectus—a financial-world version of the margin general's warning: **PAST PERFORMANCE IS NO GUARANTEE OF FUTURE RESULTS.**

But my search suggested exactly the opposite: that, given the right lens, past history can be a useful guide to future performance. No kidding. And it was the great democratizing power of the personal computer that unlocked this insight.

LATE ONE NIGHT, overwhelmed by the task of actually organizing my research, I found myself simply staring into my computer screen. So I decided to boot up and play around with some data supplied to me on a CD-ROM from Morningstar Incorporated, one of the country's leading providers of mutual funds. As I manipulated this mix of

Nine years of 13.4 percent growth? This just isn't supposed to happen.



The Winner Every Time

A \$10,000 investment in the top ten strategy in early 1970 would have yielded close to a quarter-million dollars by now.

numbers—performance and portfolio data on nearly seven thousand funds—liased idly on whose inside might be found the golden key to picking next year's winner. I tried combing through the histories of bond funds, which charge you up to 8 percent simply for the privilege of buying their shares. I tried looking at funds that have various charges in obscure "other" fees. I looked at funds that invest in only one kind of asset, like, say, gold, diversified funds that spread their money around in stocks and bonds, funds that play it safe (lots of bonds in the portfolio), funds that invest in only foreign countries or foreign companies, and on and on.

Over the long haul, stock (equity) funds seemed to do better than bond or money-market funds, so I sorted the CD-ROM universe down to no load, all-equity funds, which don't charge you anything to buy or sell their shares (yet seem to do as good a job as their fee-loaded rivals).

Then, suddenly, there they were, staring me in the face: a scoreful of numbers that not only defied the Efficient Market Theory but laughed in the face of the SEC's warning. What the numbers showed was simply this: If you were to buy the top ten no-load, all-equity mutual funds for the year that just ended, hold them for exactly one year, then sell them and reinvest the proceeds in the top ten of the year just ending—and repeat that process over and over and over, year after year—the more years you were ready to commit, in any twenty years, you'd have a serious pile of money.

The data on the Morningstar CD-ROM were back only as far as 1976, but even within that time frame, I couldn't believe what I was seeing. If an investor had plunked down money on January 1, 1976, buying the top ten funds for the year that had just ended, then repeated the process annually, he would have seen his investment grow to almost

150,000 by December 31, 1997—a 15.4 percent annualized return.

It took a while for the implications of that number to sink in. Nine years of 15.4 percent annualized growth? That's nearly as impressive as the 15.4 percent annualized return produced by Fidelity's mighty Magellan Fund during the same period.

Just how big a return is 15.4 percent annually? Here's a clue: Invest software produces something called the Quick-on-Financial Theorem, which is designed to help you get the maximum growth out of your IRA or 401(k) account. Just when you tell the program to calculate the return from a 15.4 percent interest rate over nine years, Quick-on has the computer equivalent of a nervous breakdown. It answers: "Risk Unknown: the rate of return is over the maximum rate for any asset class considered here." Then it stops computing and, in effect, took down.

This sort of thing just isn't supposed to happen. At least as of 1976, the scholarly journal of finance published a study of twenty years' worth of mutual-fund performance and concluded that as a recent issue of *Worth* approvingly summarized, "Individual fund performance was no better than mere random chance might predict." In other words, last year's hot fund could just as easily turn out to be this year's dud—or if not this year, then certainly next year or the year after that. In the mutual-fund business, that's the message in holy writ. There had to be some flaw in the data, some error on my part.

THE NEXT DAY, I called Morningstar spokesman Mike Van Dam. "No," he said, "there's something wrong somewhere. We'll recheck your steps."

When he called me back, he still sounded skeptical but perhaps a touch less sure of himself. "We're looking into this thing deeper," he said. "What you've done is look at fund investing in a different way—some way that hasn't been done before. With mutual funds, the idea is that you buy them and hold them for years, not trade them like speculative stocks. I'll get back to you."

A day or two later, I got a call from Jim Ralston, one of Mike's research colleagues. "These numbers you've got are amazing," he said. "Everybody here is talking about them. Basically, what

you're suggesting seems to put out that I've got some more work to do, because some of the funds that are turning up in your averages are open only to institutions, and we've got to get them out of there. Also, there's a very successful fund called 20th Century Gilt Trust that you can't sell for ten years, so we've got to get that one out, too. We'll see if that changes anything. I'll get back to you."

I decided to call Ray Dalio. Everyone should have a Ray Dalio Friend in his life, and Ray is mine. He heads a multibillion-dollar money-management company called Bridgewater Associates, lives in a mansion overlooking Long Island Sound, and clearly knows what he's doing. When you visit Bridgewater, you find a sprawling office with dozens of young people in blue jeans, staring in to computer screens and talking into phones. They're tracking minute-to-minute changes in everything from

Leaving Wall Street in the Dust

The strategy's most impressive five-year performance against the market, from June 1976 through May 1991, would have yielded a 28.8 percent annualized return, as against the Dow's 5.88 percent.



Canadian bonds to Italian lire. In a corner office, presiding over it all, sits Ray, forty-seven, pondering God, knowing what's important to my relations, he said. Sure, leave your stuff with me. We'll give it to some of the computer kids and have them rip it to pieces. There's got to be a flaw in it somewhere."

But he was clearly excited, and he spun off on a tangent about something

called Modern Portfolio Theory—about "buying the fund, selling the market, and capturing the alpha," which turned out to involve identifying and investing in "alpha management" experts. "I had to concede I didn't know when the hell he was talking about."

"There are all these smart guys running the funds now," he concluded helpfully. "The question is, How can you buy their alpha?"

Then he hit me with another question: Just how statistically significant can a near-year trend really be?

"Why don't you go back to Morningstar and see if they'll give you, oh, twenty years of data," and Ray waving his arm.

And while you're at it, ask them if they have monthly data. With monthly data over twenty years, we'd really be looking at something."

Morningstar did have monthly data, and it was available all the way back to 1976. What's more, it was right there

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MONEY TALKS

on the CD ROM. By plotting to the base level of the program, two young computer jocks at Bridgewater, Peter Schmitt and Garry Jensen, were able to download onto an Excel spreadsheet the monthly performance data of more than eighteen hundred no-load, all-equity funds stretching back to January 1, 1971. Then, by writing a series of "macros" programming commands, they sorted out the top ten funds for every month in the past nineteen years—complete with their average returns for each month.

But that was only the beginning. To construct the possibility that periods surge in the overall stock market—up, from the trough of the 1930s bear market to the previous peak of early October 1929—would give a false picture of the strategy's profitability, they wrote a clever algorithm for the spreadsheet. The result was a complex, gridlike after that allowed one to plot a trend beginning in any given month in the nine-two-year time frame and ending in any other month—to determine exactly the rate of return for any conceivable period during the entire nineteen years.

Period one, the whole apparatus would have covered half a wall. And to the amazement of its creators, the data confirmed my discovery. There were five periods from 1926 to 1994—an interval that spanned stagflation, recession, the worst stock market crash since 1929, and the strongest bull market of the twentieth century—when trading, month by month, in and out of the top no-load, all-equity mutual funds failed to get ahead and stay ahead of the market.

Four periods in this century have proven a greater disappointment for investors than the four years of the Carter administration, 1977 to 1981. In that period, the Dow Industrials never traded outside a narrow range between 300 and 350. On the Ronald Reagan stock office, the Dow stood almost exactly where it had been four years earlier. It was an era so dismal that a crapped business Web to predict the demise of the entire business of buying and selling common stocks.

But if you had put \$10,000 into mutual funds in January 1977 and thereafter followed a monthly trading strategy, you wouldn't have been at all disappointed. Instead of four years of spending in circles, you'd have wound up, on January Carter's last day in office, string snap-

teegy—a stuporizing, annualized return of 28.6 percent per year.

Among all liquid investment assets, only precious metals and petroleum performed better during this period—yet from the exorbitant Reagan stock office, these assets started giving back all of their gains and more. Today gold is selling at roughly 1950 per ounce, just about where it was ten years ago, and crude-oil prices have slipped to where they stood fifteen years ago—and that doesn't take into account the inflation dilated value of the dollar.

By contrast, if you'd followed my mutual-fund trading strategy and kept mindlessly selling over those dismal weeks after month, year after year, you would today be sitting on what is, in relative terms, a heap of money: the size of Mont Blanc more than \$104,000 by last May—an annualized return of 21 percent during a period in which the broader market, as measured by the Dow, returned just over 15 percent.

What's the difference, from a long-term investment perspective, between 15 percent and 21 percent per year? What's the difference between Cyndi Lauper and Chubby Checker?

Just for laughs, let's say long-term interest twenty years. Allowing for tax-free compounding in an IRA or Keogh account, the difference between 15 percent and 21 percent is the difference between \$15,000 and \$173,500.

During the nineteen-year period covered by the Bridgewater Morningstar data, the monthly returns of the top ten funds showed declines from the previous month about one third of the time. But the "down" months were still lower than the "up" months were high, with the result that, on a year-to-year basis, only five of the intervening years returned a negative number. And in no year was the down number so steep that the original 1977 capital investment was eroded.

Surveying the Bridgewater grids, I could clearly see that there was one or two periods in which it was no good to put your money into stocks, periods—and entering in this mutual-fund strategy was no exception. The worst month by far would have been October 1929, when the stock market crashed 194 points in a day. If you'd been unlucky enough to get into the panic that very month, and on October 1 had put \$10,000

THE BOFFINS BAFFLED

What chemistry, we are often asked, takes place in the ancient haunts of the sherry casks where The Macallan has shimmering for a decade (at least) before it is allowed out to meet the bottle?

The fact is, we do not know.



It is a matter of history, of course, that someone in the last century discovered that whisky ages best in cask casks which have previously contained sherry (and that today The Macallan is the last malt whisky exclusively to be so matured).

And it is a matter of fact that in goes the translucent striping spirit. And out comes amber-gold nectar positively *luminous* with flavor.

But let us take our cue from a party of scientists when we once invited to explore the matter "Magic" they exclaimed, swigging their drink in a most unbothered manner. "But magic is merely undiscovered science and we'd like to take some home for further investigation."

THE MACALLAN.
THE SINGLE MALT
SCOTCH.

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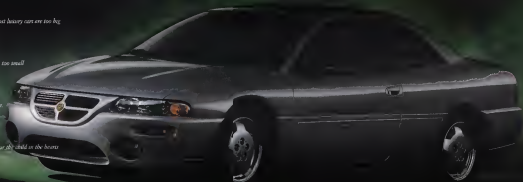
Most sport coupes, too small.

The Sebring Coupe.

It is, if you'll excuse the word in the heart

of a few Chrysler engineers,

just right.



into the top-performing funds of the previous month, your portfolio would have been worth only 50% by the end of October, a halving or 50 percent loss in only a few days. But if you just stuck with the program, continually rolling your money over, that original \$1 million investment would as of this writing be worth \$1.67, for an annualized gain of 8.5 percent. That's not as good as the 10.6 percent the Dow has earned during the period, but the numbers suggest that the gap will narrow, disappear, and eventually open up again in favor of this strategy.

This pattern holds for almost any seven-year period you pick. When the overall market is down, that investment strategy is down about as much, but when the market is up, the strategy beats it—even during the great bull market of the 1990s.

The All-time Killer Month

If on April 5, 1993, you had put money in March's ten top-earning funds, by May 1 you'd have cleared 14.3 percent on your investment.

Fund Name	March 1993 Percentage	April 1993 Percentage
United Services Gold Shares	18.7	36.4
DFA Japanese Small Company	15.9	37.4
Vanguard Spec. Port.-Gold & Pr. Met.	15.3	32.3
Japan	13.9	28.8
Invesco Strategic Gold	13.4	33.2
Realcoin Gold Equities Ind.	13.3	33.4
State St. Research Intl. Equity, C	12.8	30.5
Vanguard Intl. Equity Ind., Pnc. Port.	12.3	25.8
USAA Investment Trust Gold	12.1	36.0
United Services World Gold	11.6	34.6

If you'd put \$10,000 into the Dow in July 1992, when the average stood at 790, and sold those stocks near the market's peak at the end of June 1993, when the Dow reached 2,925, your rate of return would have averaged a dizzying 30.0 percent.

usually. But with my mutual-fund strategy, you'd have done even better: 35 percent.

Few people on Wall Street have equaled that performance. Consider Michael Steinhardt's Steinhardt Partners fund, which averaged 20 percent annualized growth between the late 1980s and the late 1990s. Similarly, from the start of the 1990s to the end of the 1990s, George Soros chalked up a stunning 34 percent annualized return for his Quantum Fund. But Soros's performance has been surely eroded: down 15 percent one year, up 55 percent the next.

But my automatic-pilot approach to investing has little sense volatility at all. Inverse-volatility measures the appeal of a deal through something known as the Sharpe Ratio, a statistical formula that compares an investment's risk with its return. According to calculations done by the computer kids at Bridgewater, the Sharpe

Ratio of the investment strategy we were looking at was slightly more than that of the Dow. In other words, my strategy guarantees a better rate than the market as a whole—and without the huge overhead costs that men like Soros and Steinhardt must carry.

So now comes the strategy really works? My original hunch had been that the top-performing funds got that way because they benefited from the best managers and that by buying last month's winners, we were using their success as a "leading indicator" for how they'd perform over a similar time frame in the future.

But when I tried the idea out on Jim Stearns, head of research for a big mutual-fund consulting outfit in California, he laughed and found me a study he'd just completed that argued I was dead wrong. It began: "Our experience at Collins Associates indicates that past performance is generally a poor predictor of future performance."

The report described a study showing that fund managers in the top

quartile during any three-year period had a 75 percent likelihood of dropping into a lower quartile during the next three-year period. "If anything, the top-performing managers of the past tend to slightly underperform over subsequent periods," the report concluded.

But the issue isn't whether a fund manager dropped from one quartile to the next in any given period, it's whether the fund manager is still beating the market. It's great if you can stay a superb performer, but dropping back to simply average shouldn't make you chopped liver.

Indeed, Greg Jensen saw something else. Having lived with the idea day and night, he'd begun to recognize a pattern. When stocks were rising in the overall market—during, say, the bull market of the 1990s—the hottest funds rose dramatically more, month after month, than the overall market.

The reason was obvious. They had the hottest stocks. It wasn't necessarily the brilliance of the managers that caused these funds to lead up to what turned out to be hot stocks; it could as

easily have been dumb luck—a sector in the economy unexpectedly heats up, or some quirk in the world economy leads a fire under some little subsector of foreign-stock funds. Trading in and out of these stocks on a monthly basis allowed one to capture some of the heat before the sector had time to cool off.

In March 1993, for instance, the Japan Fund surged 17 percent on the collapsing dollar and the rising yen. During the following month, the fund faltered, increasing in value only 1.2 percent more—such a modest performance by "top ten" standards that it didn't make the April buy list for May at all. But 1.2 percent in a single month is nothing to sneeze at; throughout a year, it's just over a 15 percent annualized return.

Similar examples abound in the data. Last February, the second-hottest fund in the universe was the Robertson Stephens Value Growth Fund, which racked up a blistering 9.9 percent gain. If you'd bought Robertson Stephens on March 1, you would have wound up doing just about half that well for the month alone—"only" 5.6 percent. The



SURGON GENERAL'S WARNING: Smoking Causes Lung Cancer, Heart Disease, Emphysema, And May Complicate Pregnancy.

stocks in the Robustness Stephens portfolio were cooling off—not growing, it could overweigh but making a nice thirty-day soft landing that would have given you an annualized equivalent of 3.3 percent on your money.

"When we're doing with that quarterly trading strategy it's playing 'sucker season,'" Grog said. "We're getting into stocks when they're hot, and we're getting out before they're cold. We're making money all right, but it's got nothing to do with management at all."

THAT'S HOW I ENDED up sitting with my buddy Harry, knocking back easy rails and telling him what my members showed—namely, that I'd discovered an investment strategy that ignored the Efficient Market Theory, sidestepped the management obsessions of Modern Portfolio Theory, and needed the SEC's required warnings.

And that's why Harry was begging his permission not to please God just this once—put a sock in it, and we'd soon be peddling in the streets, our little hedge fund practically minting money.

Then Harry's face began to cloud over. He could see an obstacle the funds would be investing in. "If we were just going to move around a couple of million bucks, it wouldn't be a problem," said Harry, speaking of the amount as if he were referring to a coffee tip. But he was right. To make such an investment appealing to an institution, he had to be talking up millions, millions. And a top million-dollar investment is million upon arbitrary money in and out of ten different funds each month.

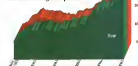
"Some of the biggest funds wouldn't care," he said. "But for smaller funds, it would be too destabilizing. Imagine how you'd feel if you were running some hot little no-load with ten million under management, and you woke up one morning and find your assets have jumped 35 percent and you have to invest it all in some killer stock immediately or your performance will fall apart and all your other investors will start howling for

their money back. You'd be furious."

At Harry explained it, the funds held the leverage, for ultimately they decide whom to accept as an investor and whom to turn away. With small amounts—\$1,000, \$50,000, even \$50,000—speculating in a fund's shares

Outrunning the Bull Market

In its last five years, July 1992 through June 1997, the top ten strategy would have yielded a 38.5 percent annualized return while the Dow averaged 38.0 percent.



wouldn't be a problem. But as the industry is currently set up and managed, big speculators wouldn't last for long.

Add it all up and, set-net, as they say on Wall Street, here's what it comes down to: At last, the little guy gets a break. Those who know the business will tell you that no more than five thousand people—the portfolio managers of the big institutions—basically control the market. The beauty of my strategy is that it gives the little guy a way to disinvest behind those big players while at the same time diversifying his risk.

Now, buying and selling mutual-fund shares every month can have some costly tax consequences when the funds report your capital-gains distributions to the IRS. However, as long as you hold your shares in an IRA, 401(k), or similar tax-deferred account, the capital gains will just keep piling up, tax-free, until you retire, at which point withdrawals from your account will be taxed only at your going income-tax rate.

How can you keep track of each month's top-performing funds? One obvious way is to buy Morningstar's data, which is mailed out monthly on a CD-ROM or a floppy disk. Subscriptions range from \$99 to \$995, depending on how much detail you want (2001-2005). Other firms, including Westborough and Alexander Street, have similar software. And of course

you can always borrow into the mutual-fund data on your own in a publication such as *Barron's*.

Where can you buy these funds? Doing business with each separate fund would be enormously time consuming, fortunately, investment firms such as

Charles Schwab, Jack White, and Fidelity borrow them all, for little or no commission, just about every no-load fund there is. Just open an account and buy and sell your shares over the phone.

Schwab says its average investor pays 30 in commissions for every \$10,000 traded.

At this rate, even if you had traded all ten funds in your portfolio each month from 1992 to 1997, your annualized return would have dipped from 38 percent to around 36 percent. That would still have beaten the broad mar-

ket averages, and in some situations you might have gained more year-end tax deductions on your commissions.

Even so, it would be tempting to slash your commission fees (and your paperwork) by simply buying and holding your portfolio for a year at a time. Such an approach, at first sight, how I stumbled on this strategy in the first place. But as the statistical whizzes at Bridgewater point out, looking at the historical performance of yearly portfolios gives you only one-eighth as many data points to study as does a monthly approach. The odds increase enormously that what appears to be a trend in the data is really only a statistical fluke. With monthly data, you can count on what you're seeing: with yearly data, you just don't know.

So, to sum up, one data strategy of mutual-fund investing, and just history says that over time, you're virtually guaranteed to beat the benchmarks against which Wall Street's price measure their performance. While no fund manager will truly ever be able to claim that past performance guarantees future results, this is one investment approach that really does suggest that past can be prologue. As Mark Twain once quipped, history may not repeat itself precisely, but it certainly seems to rhyme a lot. Sometimes the trick comes down to listening for the right meter. ■







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A Special Promotion for Esquire Readers

ESQUIRE Style Agenda

Celebrating Men's Wear And All That Jazz in Short Hills

Esquire and Nordstrom are pleased to present an evening of food, wine, and jazz with a focus on men's suits and fun lahngs. Designer Ron Wilson will make a special appearance with an Esquire editor at the newly opened Short Hills, New Jersey, store to discuss personal style and the many faces of the suit. We'll hear that Mr. Wilson is quite a jazz performer as well as a designer, so don't miss this chance to watch him jam with his band.

Reviews

Mail of Short Hills

1200 Morris Turnpike, Short Hills, NJ

October 12

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\$15.00 per person; tickets will be held at the door.

Please call 201-461-5500, ext. 2950, by October 4 to confirm your attendance.

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Food, wine, and fashion have long played important roles in Italian culture. Fresh and innovative, the New Yorker men's sportswear collection offers a subtle approach to dressing and Italian design. Through color, fabric, and attention to detail, Carlo Baratta presents a fashion statement that is hip yet sophisticated. To discover how Baratta's fusion of rich colors and textures, be sure to visit the following retailers: Deane, Henry James, Ridge Trunk, and Sy Grove. For additional information, please call the showroom at 212-255-0044.



As Time Goes By

For nearly 150 years, Omega has created timepieces that synthesize technological excellence and artistry. Omega's rich Swiss craftsmanship has evolved over the decades, setting a standard of quality that has marked significant events in history—the World's Fair, the Olympic Games, and much first step on the moon. Continuing the tradition, Omega guarantees the Seamaster Professional Diver timepiece, a stylish choice for watch enthusiasts who know no boundaries. The Seamaster Professional Diver makes its screen debut in Golden Eye this December, worn as the official timepiece for the intrepid agent 007. Making a bit of history with reality, the new James Bond will find the Seamaster watch not only the perfect timekeeper but also a valuable treasure. The Omega Seamaster Professional is available at selected jewelers; please call 800-795-6343 for the jeweler nearest you.



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Everyone Wants A Gibson

The time has come to announce the winner of the Gibson Guitar Contest: Congratulations to Thomas D. Russo of Westchester, MA, our grand-prize winner, who was selected at random to receive his very own Gibson Nighthawk. Thanks to all entrants for your interest in Gibson and our contest.

To survive in the bloody late night of the long knives, some times even a nice guy has to win ugly. By Bill Zehme

Leno Lives!

WHAT THEN OF LENO? Is he man or machine? Is he good or evil? Theories abound, yet none satisfies. There is nothing simple about Leno, although he would argue otherwise. He dislikes emotions and claims to possess none. He has learned to question pain, so as to distract himself from ever feeling any. When bad things happen to him, he will shrug and actually forget them. In this way, he has erased much of his life story. Long ago, he literally erased every tape of his first four months of *Tonight Shows*, declaring that they will never be seen again. "They don't exist," he says firmly. "Never happened." Conversely, he has been known to reinvent other key moments in his life, adding fine comic embellishment. (Rule one: Never mistake a comedian's anecdote for fact.) Yet where others are concerned, he fearlessly quests for truth. "What do you hear?" he asks everyone he knows before asking anything else. "Got any good gossip?" Information seals off his heart, if not his decency. Inscrutable and unper-
vious, Leno cannot be surprised. He cannot be hurt. Also, Jay Leno cannot be stopped.

Death-defying act: "I may look dumb," Leno says, "but, you know, I'm Italian. We can't be underestimated."





"Suddenly, I was perceived as the bad guy. I never

Leno lives to be misjudged: "I may look dumb," he will say, "but, you know, I am Italian. We can't be underestimated." Indeed, according to legend, he was lost at everything before he became funny. He thrills to be counted out, knowing full well he never can be. Born when his mother was forty-seven, he has ever since turned up when he was not supposed to. It was in this manner, three years ago that he became the host of *The Tonight Show* ("The biggest gig in the world," he would call it, in deference to the man he replaced.) For him to get the job, had blood spilled everywhere, and he has been working nightly to remove the stain. He has not succeeded entirely, nor has he finished dribbling. Leno must make nice or die trying.

"By this time, I was supposed to be long gone," he says. But he is still here, better than he was, not as good as someone else, dependable all the same. "I'm not supposed to just go away," says David Letterman, who knows Leno like a brother, albeit one who does not speak to the other. It has come to this, although it was not supposed to.

IET ME TELL YOU of the Leno I know. I know him of the dozen years I've known him. I've never doubted him. More than once, we took to the road, where he thrived in clubs and where I would study his technique. In comedy, no greater technician lives. He practiced every day.

He dispensed jokes in all pockets of the nation, fulfilling 250 gigs a year, minimum. "Life is a marathon, not a sprint, and you just work hard," he always said, and so he did, more than any other comic. On planes, in hotel rooms, I listened to him and learned his beliefs. He was affable and kind but also pointed and judgmental. There was much in the world he did not like, and his opinions stung. The apologetic Italian people he considered idiots. He questioned the general behavior of Americans. He spoke about the general habits of actresses. "It's so male," he would say, usually peacefully—though sometimes anything. But what offended him most was impersonations of any sort. He saw no need for it, ever. In Los Angeles, we would ride in his magnificent roadster, and he would take me to his home and to the set of *The Tonight Show*—this during his early career as solo nightclub host. He led me behind the desk and pointed out Johnny Carson's cigarette burns in the carpet. He found that funny, as he finds all human foibles. "So stupid," he said and giggled in his winning Leno-vogue fashion.

He had two managers then, a married couple, and I knew only the man. His name was Jerry Kaschick, and Leno called him Kash. Kash was a large, old-time showbiz guy, full of booze and blarney. The two men had a modicum of common respect. It says there was a booking agency,

Leno would tease Kash, and Kash would tease back. "It's not my fault," Leno would protest. And Kash would answer, "Nothing is ever your fault." And that was true. Leno never placed himself on any scenario where fault could find him. (That is why managers care.) Repeatedly, Kash told me with over and over, "Joy Leno, him so dumb underbelly." The world of Leno, he said, was about two things only: being funny and being cars and motorcycles.

Kash died shortly after I left last June. On his deathbed, he coaxed from Leno promises that soon propelled him to something higher and then into outer space. Among his last requests, Kash made Leno pledge to stand by his wife, Helen, and have her continue to guide the Leno career. Helen Gorman Kaschick had, in fact, discovered Leno and always steered his professional course, letting her husband handle daily minutiae. But now Kash was dead, and she entered with a new and desperate vengeance. By all accounts, Helen was volatile and abusive, which made her the opposite of Leno, giving great pause to all who knew him. In the name of Leno, she began to crumple everyone in her path.

I called him at home one day five years ago. He was in his garage, as he usually is on his rare days off. At the time, I was helping to compile a copy collection book celebrating comely betes—Hope, Carson, Letterman, Pryor, Mullen, Seinfeld, Newhart, Ricketts, the entire pantheon of Leno peers and predecessors all included. But now, I'd suddenly learned, Leno had withdrawn his participation from the project, and that made no sense. So I called to see if there was some misunderstanding. Friendly as ever, unconcerning as never before, Leno told me his belief that comedians weren't supposed to be in trouble. "Too pretentious," he said. "Plus, I don't want any record of any career after I'm gone. No embarrassing record." But, I reminded him, even Johnny and Dave were happily on board—the implications of which were obvious. He measured apologetically around, as we chatted amiably about other things and hung up. (Then, Leno severed himself from office-cliche politeness.)

The next day, Helen Kaschick called me and began to accuse and never stopped screaming "How dare you call my husband my back!" she thundered. "You have ruined your relationship with Jay Leno! You can never call him at home again!" she went on like this without slowing breath. My recorder whirled, while her hysteria, I offered sympathy and comforted to be crypical. She did not care. So I immediately called Leno at home, again, and told him that I hadn't meant to offend him and that his manager had just decimated me and that I was terribly confused. He seemed not to hear what I was saying him and instead said, firmly and emphatically, "There's no problem. Everything's fine. Call me anytime. You've got the house number. Keep in touch." But, of course, I never called him again.

At the moment, I had begun to doubt Leno. That I needed an old revelation he often advanced that he felt no creators whenever he performed his stand-up act, that he was so proficient at his work that he could somehow just himself to "sleep" while taking his jokes. I wondered if he was now living entirely in a trance. Something didn't add up. Something was off. Leno had not seem to be Leno anymore.

understood where that came from. What the hell did I do?"

Next, the world heard that he would succeed Carson. The news came quickly, stunning Carson (who had not been consulted) and crushing Letterman (who had negligently earned the job). But never mind that now Leno shortly took the throne and continued not to be his old self. His daily shows, overseen by Helen Kaschick, were uniformly awful, bearing no resemblance to his act as a soloist. Then Helen was gone, fired, banished. Leno kept on making audience television, although not as bad as before and, once in a while, not too bad at all.

NOW look at him! See the change! The first redemption of Leno is nearing completion. I have come late to the purge. It has been ongoing since September of 1992, dating from the moment Helen Kaschick was ripped from his side. The patient improves daily. Traumatized by turmoil and tragedy, he is—as age forty-two—finally mending, something he has never before needed to be. It is now possible to watch him and not wince. And his courage, while never small, goes from formidable, giving great pause to the Letterman-Leno Show, which has been overtaken just twice in two years of weekend-week battle with Leno. The first time came only last July, the week of Hugh Downs' post-Cherrie Brown appearance. Leno won that one on sheer impudence. (His opening question to Cherrie, however, stored him further: "What the hell were you doing?") At last, Leno had tested himself, a forgotten scarlet: it seemed to him. By then, he had already apologized to just about everyone he ever knew. He'd shoulder-bladed himself with grace—far wrongs he either ignorantly permitted or shamefully sanctioned. (He owes to no other the former.) "I was on old situation to suddenly be made one to be this outside," he says now. "I was perceived as the bad guy and I never understood where that came from. What the hell did I do?"

But, of course, it is what he did not do. He did not stop the madness. He overed his part from the danger, because that is what he does. "A classic case of closing your eyes to what's going on around you," he acknowledges. (Sleep/Sleep) That, however, may be no surprise in an abba Helen Kaschick hold frame, unattested away over the Leno psyche. Her life had known profound terror—the death of a three-year-old son and a head with brain cancer. It was not without cause, then, that she may have seen the world as an evil place and believed that survival required so small measures. She told

Leno that no one could be trusted and that only she could protect him. It did not occur to him to doubt her, much less question her motives. "Nice, nice," he would mutter numbly, cheerlessly, then go back to his garage.

After all, she got him results, got him *The Tonight Show* no less. To do so, she had blasted network balls with dagger-bearer ultimatums, preemptive strikes. To expedite Leno's success—but without his name—she reportedly planted a story, in February 1992, on page one of the *New York Post*. The



The king is dead
After Leno's first show, Kaschick was heard to say nothing. "Fuck you, Johnny Carson!"

headline read: *JOHNNY CARSON—WE LOOK TO YOU TO STOP CARSON FOR JAY LENO*. Carson was humiliated, and, because he then decided vengeance need suffer tiny foils, he announced his retirement without warning three months later—only to humiliate his network in kind. (By as ever, before dropping the bomb at an officers' meeting in Carnegie Hall, he told all

gathered, "I like Jay Leno. He is very concerned about my health. In fact, he wanted that I go through Central Park about making tonight.") As Carson knew all and told Leno so, who denied all. (He should have suspected his chase not so.) And, while continuing duty as network boss during Carson's final year, Leno was never again intended to be Johnny's guest on the panel. Helen flamed over this. (At one Leno staff meeting that year, which Leno did not attend, she reportedly began to chant, "The Jerry Carson, die!") Nor did Carson make mention of Leno in his farewell hour. That, too, angered Helen, who forbade Leno to mention Carson upon his last show the following Monday night. Maria Leno urged her husband to do otherwise, at all of his confidantes, but Leno obeyed his manager, and it looked apologetic. (Leno, an ungovernable upstart? How could it be?) As that broadcast ended, Helen Kaschick was heard to exclaim off-camera, "Thank you, Johnny Carson!"

For the next few months, misstep ensued. Old Leno crosses fell away. Fellow-boss Archie Hall and Dennis Miller abandoned him and renounced his friendship. Leno played

"He would be well within his rights to never speak to me," Leno says of Carson. "Obviously, he favors Dave."



Long live the king: Jimmy plays Jerry-bragman-always with Letterman, Garry Shandling, and Leno

repeated. He asked Helen about the darkening hair, and she would sneeze. "Go wake your fucking girlfriend! It bewitch the bouncers!" So he let her smell NBC no longer let him let her. They called it an intervention. He did not understand, but it was pounded into his head. Finally exposed, she confessed: "I've been serving you inside dreams for the last eight years. I just haven't bothered showing you how I slaughtered the cow." And then it was over.

LET'S GET the perihelion for four," Leno suggests. "It'll be funny." His blue Leno eyes twinkle. His fine wife, Mary, greets. On a summer Saturday night, we three have come to Bath's Chris Steak House in Beverly Hills. I have booked in on Leno-like night, the only night of the week the couple eats together. To compete with Letterman, Leno keeps guesstimate hours, not at all unhappily. Each weekday morning, he is at work in Burbank by nine and never home again before

mine at night. Then, by midnight, his friend, Tonight Show writer Jimmy Bragman, himself a veteran comedian, arrives at the hillside Leno manor, and, for a few hours more, the two men witness much of the next Leno monologue, lone jewel in the replacement crown. (Because it is his one great strength, he has infused his monologue from its original six minutes to a sweltering 10 minutes.) He admits on four hours' sleep per night. Out of fifty-two weeks, he gets four weeks off, during which time he is unavailable. "I hate those weeks off," he tells me. "It's not a week's vacation just means you're now a week behind."

Such is the life gently witnessed by Mova Nicholson Leno, dark beauty, wise partner. The Leno with fifteen years has been condemned to cohabit with a human blur. She sees him when the men him, but she always sees her clearly. She is his business. "I think about my life as a natural person. I've ever known and also the most loved," she told me once. "When we first moved in together, I kept wanting for the partner-the one stuff that always emerges when you love with somebody. And it never happened." There is a sweet patience to her adoration. I watch her smile the way Jerry Leno looks at her. He speaks. I watch her laugh as he pounces romantically upon the vast plane of weeks she lands before us. (It ventures anywhere between Leno and his food is to risk losing a limb.) "Honey," she would, but he has already set the legendary pace in maintaining motion. It is just a pretty sight. Through the night, she would, he calls for her and she comes. (He never points out. "Joy is obvious when most is in form of his face.")

Leno, although, of course, is a perennial state. It once nearly destroyed him. So I wonder, in the grim matter of Helen Raskin, when did he know and when did he know it? "Some things I know, some things I don't know," he says. And he sighs profoundly. "But the things I do know were always promised to me as her response to some conspiracy or other. It was always, 'We gave screw them first, 'cause they want to screw you.' With her, every action called for an overreaction. All these people were allegedly against me-and of course they weren't at all. I was seduced of myself that I let it happen. But it's my fault. It was my wish. If you're the captain of the ship, you go down with it."

What is known now helps no one especially. Now Helen Raskin has moved to New York, where she is said to be ill, and chooses not to comment. Leno has not spoken to her since the time of her dismissal. (Shortly afterward, Raskin appeared in *Twelve*, starring her grandson.) "It's almost the same story," she said. "Every time a woman gets into a position of some kind of authority where they're not wanted, they're considered crazy, hysterical, a nut." The shame she brought him manifests itself now as cold disposition. "I look at their whole relationship as life's had two weeks out of my life," he says. "Never happened." Through selective statistics, he obscures and detaches from his own ferocious ambition. Leno is no dog, but plays one to perfection. Of Helen Raskin and her late husband, the blustery Karl, he says, "It was bad cop, worse cop. I would give it all up to have never met either of them. I would I would give up this job in a second. Because it's not the way too much." I ask him about not mentioning Carson on his first official *Single Show*. "That was the biggest mistake of my entire life," he says with palpable woe. "Don't forget, we weren't on tape for those first two weeks. We were broadcasting live. And in my mind, if I had said something about Johnny on live TV, I thought she would have gone nuts and started screaming at me on the air. I thought, Oh, just let me just get through this. But I didn't enjoy it. After that show, I didn't say, 'Hey, let's have a party.' I remember saying to myself, 'Why aren't I enjoying this? Why isn't this fun? Why don't I care anymore?' And I thought, is this what it's gonna be for the next twenty years?"

LET US NOW PONDER the emotional life of Leno, a logic changed with much controversial discourse. One industry observer describes Leno thus: "No interests, no feelings, no soul." Leno's executive producer, Debbie Vickers, tells me, not without concern, "He's very afraid of feelings." I mention to Denise Miller the famed Leno method of shutting himself down "09" he exclaims. "Like *The Johnsons*? Nobody knows Leno's back-story. I don't, and it was a decent friend of his somewhere along the way, he got hung from a tree by the football team with a massive wedge-and he went inward." Unlike Letterman, whose torment is transparent, Leno is opaque, a slab of comedy marble. "I have an experience," he says proudly. "Think like a man, make like a woman. And that's how I get through life. Most people don't know how I feel on some subjects. I don't have a temper. I don't get depressed."

When news came that HBO would make a movie of

The Last Shift, television reporter Bill Carter's detailed book about the Leno-Letterman saga, Leno turned over who would play him. (Daily News will be Helen Raskin.) "Who was a comedian, right?" he asked director Barry Thomas. "No," she said. "Who can act?" Leno roared. "O'Mig, he is gonna star!" he said. "Because, you know, I don't care." David Raskin, the actor who will be Leno, answers me, "You have trying to temper any performance by not knowing. I keep thinking that's how Jay would want it. The last farewell."

More than once, however, the Leno facade has cracked. On the day NBC first sternly suggested that Helen had to go, Jimmy Bragman found Leno in his dressing room, crying. When his mother died two years ago, Leno called Bragman from the airplane, flying home to Boston. "He could barely talk," Bragman recalls. "He was in tears the whole conversation." Upon his return to the air, Leno sat at his desk and spoke briefly and movingly of her passing. "I count among my friends people like Jerry Bragman, George Carlin, Johnny Carson, David Letterman, Carol Burnett," he said, eyes watering. "But, you know, none of them could make me laugh the way she did. I really did love her, friend I ever had." (If one can believe a story that circulated later, he was heard to sigh deeply during the most comical break and sadly say to himself, "Not bad for a robot.")

After his father died last year, he again faced the camera directly—which he does not do easily—and delivered a beautiful eight-minute eulogy. It was not just his finest broadcast moment, but among the most riveting talk-show moments ever televised. Never had Leno been more pure. (It was the kind of display Letterman would not dream of attempting.) When Leno was 16, he began. "That is a long time. I lost my dad last week. It was pretty rough. Losing two parents in one year is a pretty crazy thing to take." Further along, he said, "When I hear that expressions—like 'lonely' at the top—I never know what it meant. I had no idea. Because at every point along the way, they were there for me to talk to." My dad would call and say, 'You just fight the good fight, son.' Mom, he exhorted a grief of grief. "You know, at really a lonely in the top. You have no idea. But—well, fight the good fight. Pop."

Good boy to the end, Leno lost all innocence upon losing his parents. Although, he made sure to make them proud. They gave him prodigies and examples. His Italian father taught him to be outgoing, charming. His Scottish mother taught him to be unemotional, analytical. "I like my mom," he says. But his father had a hot head, whereas Leno's subtle anger emerges only in response to phone company inefficiency and bad driving. (He has been known to throw rocks at cars that cut him off.) In *The Last Shift*, there will be a remembrance of an instance when Leno tried to silence a screaming Raskin by slamming a threshold portrait of himself on her desk. ("I should have hit her on the head with it," he says now.) But he blames he wasn't angry. And sometimes later, he was with Bragman, who recalls, "He couldn't have been calmer. He said, 'I was just trying to get her attention.'" Even in January of 1995, when NBC briefly considered turning *The Tonight Show* over to Letterman to keep

him from bolting to another network, Leno barely brushed The instant he got in public was the zoologist joke: "Welcome to NBC, which stands for Never Believe Your Correspondent." [If I had lost this job while my parents were alive—that would have killed me," he says, relieved to this day "I never got fired from a job in my life."

ALL THE KING'S MEN gathered but once, in black tie, to entertain the king. A photograph exists, taken long ago on the occasion of a Carson anniversary special, and Leno prizes it. There he is, with Johnny with Dave, with Garry Shandling (who, upon abdicating his substitute-hosting role, further deepened Leno's way). Captured for eternity, their body language portends history; Carson points to Letterman, Leno looks on respectfully, Shandling looks elsewhere. "By getting that picture together again," says Leno a tad ruefully (I tell him that a framed enlargement now hangs outside Carson's office in Santa Monica. "I didn't know that," he says, surprised. He has yet to drop by for obvious reasons. But he has wanted to make repairs. They met again, in the aftermath, backstage at an American Teacher Awards ceremony, and Carson gave him a welcoming send-off. "He was wonderful," says Leno. "We spoke for a long time. He was very gracious. He would certainly be well within his rights to never speak to me again. I understand that. Obviously he loves Dave. He and Dave were friends long before I came along. He's done things on Dave's show. But everybody has their foibles. That's fine. I'm thrilled that the man is cool to me."

The loss of Letterman in his life, however, disappoints Leno more than losing to him in the ratings. They seemed like a package from the start. It was through Letterman that America learned of Leno, whose attitude he reveres. They found each other, in the beginning, at the Comedy Store, the bearded Houston and the eastern flier, the gap and the jaw. Once Letterman was convinced by Carson and given his own Late Night hour after "The Tonight Show," his late Leno knew a near-miraculous guest about. Several bands he asked, Leno was never more alive. "So, what's your best, Jay?" Letterman prodded him each time. And Leno would throw with comic mastery. "There's no question that nobody helped Jay more than Dave," Mavis Leno told me a half-dozen years ago, well before anyone could guess at first Leno himself would ask Letterman always. "He's the only reason I'm here today," he says. On *The Tonight Show*, minutes before Letterman's final Late Night broadcast, Leno stressed, "Whatever you read in the paper, Dave and I are friends." That same night, he used a schoolbook blackboard as a comedy prop, and on that blackboard, in the unmistakable Leno scrawl, were the words HAVE MATHS! Leno called no attention to that on the air, but the sentiment resonated, if only at home.

But it was Leno who got what Letterman wanted. Leno

wanted it, too. In 1994, he gave the quote, "I wanted *The Tonight Show*. I admit that. And after five years [of filling in for Carson], I think I deserved it." Of course, Letterman had already been riding in the wings for a decade, but he refused to arrive like his dream. He did not wish to crowd Carson, but still, he kept to himself, as always, whereas Leno did not, as always. Just as his father sold customers door-to-door, Leno crossed the country doing stand-up and shaking hands with local NBC executives. He told "me," "My attitude was to go out and sing the numbers." He meant nothing presumptuous by it, he claims. "To go out and actually meet the customers who buy your product just seems like sound business to me." But he also says, "When the show was offered to me, I directly asked, 'Doesn't David want that? And I was told by NBC, 'He has expressed no interest in it. We like the way it works now.' I said okay. I'm not going to go to Dave and say, 'Do you want that?' I was ready to not home and wait for whatever Johnny wanted. Of course, Johnny was not even consulted, which I didn't understand. Why wouldn't you ask him? That made no sense to me."

Letterman, for his part, does not speak ill of Leno, never has. In the corridors of the CBS Late Show, however, Leno is sometimes referred to as Evil Jay, for the scheming, look-alike charade he plays in *Tonight Show* sketches. Letterman wears grumble about him of theory, but Letterman will not. Even the queasy diplomat, he tells the press that he has never seen the Leno show because he wouldn't want to be influenced by his competition. "That's true," one of his interns tells me. "I guarantee Dave has never watched—but that's probably because he still can't believe it's not his show." Last July, Letterman nevertheless announced to an assembly of TV execs, "What we're doing next—started about a week ago—we're supplying most of our guests with hoodlums and just having them get arrested." It is well-known that both he and Leno cannot begin their day without scouring the overnight ratings, itemizing every detail point. (Leno likes to note that at least he always was big in Los Angeles and Chicago.) "Why don't they just strap on guns and go do it," says Debbie Volkers, making his eyes. But Leno loves his pummelings, finds them intriguing. "The fact that Dave works hard makes me like him more," he says. "I hate whiny people who can't take the rice and que. I say 'Toss, kick me in the ass! Make me work even harder.'" So goes war.

On a recent Sunday night, I make home with him after he has turned zoologist jokes at the Comedy & Magic Club in Hermosa Beach. It's a weekly Leno ritual. ("Why did I say that stupid comment nine years ago?" he said, taking the stage. "Seemed like a great idea back in '89. Seventy-five bucks every Sunday! What?") We tool along in one of his thirty-nine automobiles, an experimental all-wheel-drive Cyclone pickup, and the Letterman name comes up, as it will. "I would love to talk cars with Dave sometime," Leno says, sounding to me like a man who misses the only other man who could ever understand him. "He knows cars and has some really good ones," he says. "It's just awkward now. I did call him a couple years ago and asked him about a Daytona Ferrari, and we talked a little bit about cars...." His voice trails off. "You know, I would love to have the opportunity to make Dave laugh again," he says. "And vice versa." He gains his engine. We head for the hills. "But now it's just so odd," he says. And it wasn't supposed to be. ■

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DESERT RATS
Party as if Geri
Melino and gambling
vicenary Frank
"Lefty" Rosenthal,
as portrayed by
Steven Seagal and
Robert De Niro
(opposite) in the
upcoming Martin
Scorsese movie
Casino.

Lefty and Geri



in Love in Vegas

A true tale of high rollers, marital gunplay, a love triangle, a car bomb, and excellent jewelry. **By Nicholas Pileggi**

SHE WAS THE MOST beautiful girl I ever saw," Frank Rosenthal remembers. "Statuesque. Great posture. And everyone who met her liked her in five minutes. The girl had fantastic charm.

"When I met Geri, she was a dancer at the Tropicana. She was also a chip hustler. She was a working

girl. She had a couple of guys who she went with, and she made about \$300,000 a year.

"I used to meet her after work, but the more I went out with her, the more I saw in her. I realized that I was changing my attitude toward her one night when I went over to see her dance at the Trop. When she came out, I saw that she was topless. Suddenly, it bothered me. I walked out. She didn't give it much thought. She just



GERI, PHE-VOLAS From a poor kid in head-me-downs to a showgirl-cas-brooker pulling in half a million dollars a year

thought I was busy. I don't think it even dawned on Geri that I was beginning to feel differently about her.

"She used to dance and finish up whatever hustles she had for the night, and then she'd meet me at Caesars. One night, she said she had an appointment at the Dunes and that she'd meet me later. I got curious. I wanted to see what she was up to. So I did what I had never done: I went over to the Dunes to see her in action.

"When I got there, the place was hot. She was throwing guys after guys at the craps table, and the guy with her was stacking each after stack. She must have pulled in \$100,000 for the girl judging by the racks of hundred-dollar chips he had in front of him. She looked up, and when she saw me, she gave me a dirty look. I knew she didn't like that I'd come by to see her. She rolled up and crapped out.

"Meanwhile, she had made the guy a small fortune. Of course, every time she made a punt, I noticed that she was stacking little black hundred-dollar chips off his pile and dropping them into her purse.

"When the guy was getting ready to cash in the roll, Geri looked at him and asked, 'What're my odds?'

"The guy looked at her purse and said, 'You're already

taken your odds in there.'

"It's understood, after a girl makes a run like that, you give her five, six, seven grand. Geri hadn't picked up anything like this, even in hundred-dollar chips.

"I was my card," she said very loudly. The guy reached for her purse. He's gonna empty her purse right there in front of us. But before he can do that, Geri leans over and grabs his chip racks and tosses them into the air as high as she can.

"Suddenly the whole casino is raining hundred-dollar black chips and twenty-five-dollar green chips. They're falling and bouncing off the tables, people's heads and shoulders, and rolling along the floor.

"Within seconds, everybody in the casino is diving for chips. I mean, players, dealers, pit bosses, security guards—everybody's fishing for the guy's chips on the floor.

"The guy is screaming and scooping up as many chips as he can. The security guys and dealers are handing him air and paddling them. It's a wild scene.

"At that point, I can't take any eyes off her. She's standing there like royalty. She and I are the only two people in the whole casino who aren't on the floor. She looks over at me and I'm looking at her.

"You like that, huh?" she says and wallops out the door. That's when I realized I had fallen in love."

Up until that moment, Frank "Lefty" Rosenthal had been more or less successful in dodging serious trouble. He was born in 1919 on Chicago's West Side and in his youth exhibited a genius for numbers and the mathematics of horse-racing and gambling. He worked in a cloak and brooder for Chicago gamblers and mobsters before he was old enough to vote. Until he went to work inside the casinos in 1949, he had held only one legitimate job—a military policeman in Rome in the 1940s, where he appeared before a congressional committee investigating the influence of organized crime on gambling. He took the Fifth Amendment thirty-seven times. He wouldn't even say whether he was left-handed, which he was, which had earned him his nickname. A few years earlier, he had pleaded guilty to consorting to bring a college basketball player in North Carolina. He had been barred from horse and dog tracks in Florida, also for alleged bribery. In 1963, he was indicted by the Justice Department in an interstate gambling and racketeering conspiracy case, but his lawyer got the indictment dismissed on a technicality. Lefty had been arrested more than a dozen times but never convicted.

In 1966, at age thirty-eight, Rosenthal made his way to Vegas for the same reason so many other Americans did up there to escape his past. Las Vegas is a city with no memory. It's the place to go for a second chance, the first clean slate for those willing to trade in the desert in order to start over. It was also the city where one could strike it rich, a land of money-chip kingdoms, the end of the rainbow, where even an average guy had a shot at a miracle.

When he met Geni McGee, Rosenthal was still only a quarter-millionaire—he made his living betting on sports—but he was well on his way to becoming one of the most powerful and controversial men in Las Vegas. Before long, he would be in charge of the largest casino operation in the state, responsible for running the Stardust and three other gaming houses. He became known as the man who introduced sports book betting on athletic events and horse racing to Vegas—an achievement that made him a true Vegas guy in local areas.

By the time Lefty and Geni met, Geni had been hustling in Las Vegas for about eight years. She, too, had come in an attempt to rewrite her life story.

Geni and her niece Barbara, grew up in Sherman Oaks, California, and went to Van Nuys High School with Robert Redford and Don Drapkin. Their father, they McGee, worked in gas stations and tinkered. Their mother, Agnes, had been chronically ill, when she was well, she took in sewing. "We were probably the poorest family in the neighborhood," says Barbara McGee Stokich. "We'd always asked Mom, 'Why do you clean and wash? It's not worth it.' When we were little kids, we got all our clothes from the neighborhood. Geni had a store then, so she said."

In 1954, when Geni graduated from high school, she got a job as a clerk in Thrifty Drugs. She didn't like it. Then she got a job as a teller in the Bank of America. She didn't like that, either. Then she got a clerical job at Lockheed.

Geni then moved to Vegas at the insistence of her high school sweetheart, a hustler who had fathered Geni's daughter Robert. "When Geni first got to Las Vegas, around 1961," Barbara says, "she was a confident woman and showgirl. I don't, when I had to move to with her after my husband walked out. Geni was very generous with me. I couldn't have made it through that stay without her. She had everything. She had blue chip stocks. She had saved her money."

Geni earned between \$100,000 and \$200,000 a year, hustling chips and plying with high rollers. She made about \$200,000 a year as a dancer at the Treppanos, and then she provided her with a work card, issued by the Las Vegas Sheriff's Office, showing that she was lawfully employed. Having a work card kept her from being harassed for hustling in a casino by Las Vegas vice cops and hotel security.

"Everybody loved Geni because she spread money around," says Ray Maysa, a former vice partner at the Flamingo Hotel. "Geni knew you had to take care of people, and she did. I mean, everybody in Las Vegas who's got any brains is on the hustle. Nobody loses off their paycheck parking cars or dealing cards."

Las Vegas is a city of jackpots, a place where a twenty-dollar bill can buy approval, a hundred-dollar bill adulation, and a thousand-dollar bill concentration. There are stories of dealers getting thousands of dollars in tips from lucky gamblers, and even winning high rollers are expected to make a laydown bet of a couple of hundred or thousand to make a good bet for in country. Mike's it at the big shows not only pay for their jobs but often give the men who bet them a percentage of their weekly tips. Street girls like Geni tipped everyone in sight.

"Geni was in love with money," Frank Rosenthal says. "To her, a night was a waste if she didn't go home with cash in her pocket. I had to give her a two-career hustle. She'd earned a good chunk of money but she'd be out, she'd ask me for money for the powder room. I'd usually give her a hundred-dollar bill. I expected her to bring me some change, but she never brought back a penny."

"I mentioned it to her once, and she said she lost a playing blackjack on the way back to the city. I knew she was lying. I didn't see about the money. I just didn't want her playing me for another one of her suckers. She had a Rolodex filled with their names. She knew guys all over the country. They'd call her up when they were coming to town. Some she dealt with. Some she gambled with. Some she took on dates, and there were some where she went all the way. If she didn't think she was going to see you again or make some money, forget it. You were gone."

"One day," Barbara says, "Geni and I were talking to a friend of hers named Linda. Geni was telling us about the different men who wanted to marry her. Guys in New York and in Italy. But she felt she couldn't leave Vegas. 'What should I do?' she asked. Linda had the answer. 'I'll never forget it.' 'Marry Frank Rosenthal,' Linda said. 'He's very



STONE AND DE NIRO correct, before it gets ugly

Geni wanted to quit all her hustles and settle down. Her friend advised, 'Marry Frank. He's very rich. Marry him, get his money, then divorce him.'

Excerpted from Caesars: Love and Honor in Las Vegas, by Nicholas Pappas, to be published by Simon & Schuster

rich. Merry Men, got his money, and then divorce him."

Frank and Gen were married on May 1, 1976, by justice of the Peace Joseph Pavlenko.

"There was never any question," Lefky says. "I knew Gen didn't love me when we got married. But I was so attracted to him that I proposed. I thought I could build a nice family and a nice relationship. But I wasn't looked. She married me because of what I stood for. Security. Strength. A well-mannered fellow. Would probably make a good father. And she was getting ahead. She wanted to be respectable. Call her girl-in-the-therapist."

"So we got married. Tremendous. It was a hell of a night. Maybe five hundred people. Her family. My family. Friends. Censor. Lobes. Crazy champagne for five hundred people. They attended a chapel in Censor Palace. I have no idea what the bill was. My wedding was complicated."

Gerri soon gave birth to a son, Steven, whom she adored. But she found the domestic life Lefky wanted her to live for too restrictive, especially since he refused to play by the rules he expected her to follow. Lefky was working day and night at the casino, and Gerri began to suspect he was seeing other women. She told her sister she had found receipts for jewelry and presents in his pockets when she took his suit to the dry cleaner's. When she accused him of being drunk and taking too many pills.

"He drove Gerri to drink," her friend recalls. "He'd come home at three in the morning, kick her out of bed, and talk to his girlfriends on the phone for hours."

So Gen started going out. Sometimes she'd stay out all night. Sometimes she'd drop her for a weekend. Lefky hired private detectives to track her down. He would turn up at her favorite bars and demand that she come home immediately. Finally he threatened to divorce her.

"Gen didn't want to lose everything," Barbara says. "But her back to the other child and make a greater effort at staying out of the judge and lawyer. I know Gen didn't want to lose another child, but that was the only way she had to keep from getting thrown out on the street. She said to tell me he was a very powerful man, that he owned the judges and courts. So they had Stephanie in 1979, but that didn't solve these problems. In fact, in many ways it made things worse. Gen loved having a baby. But being forced to have a child and for that child to be a girl—a girl in comparison with her daughter Robin—made Gen very upset. She could never warm to Stephanie. And I don't think she ever forgave Frank for making her go through the second pregnancy."

"I knew things weren't going all that well at home,"

says Lefky, "but I didn't know how bad they were for quite a while. Gen was still hard to figure. Some days, she'd wake up happy, and other times you couldn't be around her. Everything you said was a fight."

About a year after Allen Glick took over the corporation that owned the Stardust, he had a party at his place in La Jolla, and Gen and I went. He had six European taking people from Vegas to San Diego.

"On our way up there, I had told Gen, 'No fucking drinking.' We had been getting along but her drinking problem for a while, but I didn't know what I was up against."

"So the party starts, and here comes a waiter with a tray of Dom Pérignon champagne, and she takes a glass. I say to myself, 'You bitch.' There are three hundred people there. I don't want her to get loaded and make a scene."

"She drinks the glass down. I'm looking at her, but she doesn't say a word. She doesn't acknowledge I'm even looking at her. Then the waiter comes around again, and she nods. He puts a glass in front of her."

"I whisper to her, 'Listen, bitch, you put your lips to that glass, I'll knock you off that chair.'"

"She looks at me and says, 'You don't have the guts.'"

"She's like, 'I say.' "She grabs a hold of the glass with her hand. I know what was coming, so I leaned over and told Glick, who was standing there, that I didn't want to upset her, but could he try and convince Gen to put down the drink, because if she didn't, I was probably going to have to do something that I would regret for the rest of my life."

"Glick got where 'If she stone-walls me,' I told him, 'she's going down.'"

"Glick says, 'Gerri, will you do me a favor and listen to your husband?'"

"She released the drink and turned to me and said, 'You son of a bitch, I'll get even with you for that.'"

Lefky didn't have long to wait.

"One night, my alter had been sitting up and I was upstairs in bed," Lefky says. "I had called her on the intercom and asked her to get my dinner ready. After a while, I said over the intercom, 'Gen, is it ready?' She said, 'Yes, second, dear.' When she didn't tell me was that she was so drunk she never started dinner. Then, in a panic, she put the salt-baked eggs on, burnt the fucking toast, and brought it up half-asleep."

"When I look at it, I'm literally in pain. I gave her some shit. She's lying me, and she keeps coming back the cabinet."

"I'm in a passive position. I said my best to keep with her in a kind of relief, but she got her hand on the cabinet before I did. I was probably a half second behind her, but she already had her hand on the panel."

"We bumped heads, and I was bleeding from the forehead, but she started bleeding from the bridge of her nose."

"The two kids came from their bedrooms in the rear. They saw we were arguing. I said, 'Gerri! Gerri! The beds. Stop it.' And I finally got the gun away, but she still wouldn't stop arguing because she was so fucking drunk."

"I called my pal Tully to come over night away to help me with the kids and the blood and everything. I told him to call my doctor, who rushed over right away. He took us to his office, where he patched me up pretty easily but he had to give her a couple of stitches."

"She started rambling that I had broken her nose. I asked her, 'Gen, what did you intend to do with the gun?'"

"Nothing," she said. "I was worried. I shouldn't be drinking." And by the time we got home, everything was calm."

"The next morning, I'm going to work, and she walks me out to the car, and you'd think she was the perfect suburban housewife."

"Take care of yourself," she says and gives me a kiss."

"The next morning, an hour and I call the house. I ask her how she's feeling, and she says, 'I feel great. How are you, my love?' I descend her drunk voice."

"I got in the car and went back to the house. I parked the car down the block and snuck into the house. Gen was on the phone. I think she was talking to her daughter Robin."

"I hear her say, 'You've got to help me tell this motherfucker. Please help me.'"

"Hing she can't help you, Gen," I said, walking into the room. "Here I am."

"She almost died."

"You told me less than two hours ago you loved me, and now you're trying to get me killed?"

"Look what you did to my nose," she says, right back to my face. "There was no winning with her. This is the way out. I have had been going for a couple of years."

"After a while, when I'd get home, I'd come to very cautiously. Not just because of her past, but I was concerned that she would really hit someone."

"Lefky made her life miserable," says a retired FBI agent familiar with the case. "He cheated on her all the time, and he didn't care if she found out. He seemed to keep tabs on her like she was a Vegas version of a Stupid wife. He used to tape her schedule for the day onto the refrigerator in the morning, and he wanted to know where she was going to be every minute of the day."

"He even bought her a keeper so he could always get ahead of her, but she kept 'losing' it, and that drove him even more nuts. One time, she was about a half hour late coming home with her kids. She said she got caught behind a long traffic snarl that used to cross through her in the afternoon. He made her stand there in front of him as he



CHAPLIN GO LOVE: Gen with her two teenage daughters and Lefky at their wedding, staged by Censor Palace

called the outboard freight yard and got the dispatcher past to double-check the time the freight train would through.

"But so many what he did to her, she'd never have had, because there were always presents. Gen was an old hoarder. He bought her when they got married, and she stayed bought."

Frank Rosenthal had managed to get from Las Vegas everything he had hoped for—the power and money that came from having first comes to run, a gorgeous former showgirl at his trophy wife, a million-dollar house facing a golf course and equipped with a pool, a full-time housekeeper, and a close, boiling more than two hundred pairs of custom-made slacks.

But he hadn't been fully able to escape his past, a fact that would continue to haunt him trouble. He was under investigation at the time from Chicago mobsters who held illegal financial interests in the casino. He also had the suspicion maintained behind a million-dollar alien/immigration. His background led authorities to deny him a gambling license, which meant he had to start his business from behind the scenes. He was suspected of working in cabarets with a boyfriend friend who was also notorious, even by Vegas standards—a fellow Chicagoan named Anthony "the Ant" Spilner.

Spilner had grown up in an Italian neighborhood just



A FRIEND OF THE FAMILY: Anthony (left) and Tony Leary, Leary's pal from Chicago and the mob's man in Vegas

a few blocks from Leary's home. His father owned a small restaurant that attracted him of Italian food from all over Chicago, including a few share of mobsters, some of whom used the parking lot for meetings.

Spilotro rose through mob made in his hometown, working as a collector, a shakedown artist, a loan shark, and a hired killer. He was arrested and charged many times and was under constant police and FBI surveillance.

Like Leary and Gen, Spilotro arrived at the point in his life where a fresh start in new surroundings seemed like a reasonable idea. In age, he moved his wife, Nancy, and their son to Vegas.

"Tony and there was a lot of heat at home, and he asked if I would have any objections if he moved out here," Rosenthal says. "Well, a couple of weeks later, they arrived, and it was like a signal for the FBI. The next day, they started watching him and me. And in a way, I don't blame them. They assumed—everybody assumed—that Tony had come to town with instructions from Chicago, that he was the muscle in town and I was the cashier's man inside the casino. Nothing could have been further from the truth, but Tony took advantage of that incorrect perception. He'll tell people, 'I'm Frank's adviser. I'm Frank's protector'."

Soon, Spilotro became an even bigger part of Leary's life. "It was a Friday or Sunday night," Leary says. "I was at the casino. My pal Joey Casarano was standing next to me. I called the boss. It's two o'clock in the morning, and there was no answer."

"I told Casarano I was going home. It was only a five-minute drive."

"When I got there, I found Gen and Steven standing. My daughter was there alone—only by her ankle to the bed with a clothed. I'm snoring the bed and the phone rings. 'How ya doing?' It's Tony."

"Not good. What's on your mind?"
"Relax. Relax. Everything's okay. She's okay. You two have been fighting. She wanted to discuss your problems."

"He said Gen had dropped Steven off with a neighbor. He said I should relax and come over to the Village Pub."

"I drove over there raging. It was kind of crowded. They were waiting inside the front door. He tried to quiet me down. 'Inside, don't be in a booth with her back to me. She was loaded. She just kept saying I should let her alone. After a while, I took her home. On the way out, Tony told me not to be too rough on her. She's only trying to save my marriage,' he said."

"She was a beautiful person," but he drove her to drink. Gen's friend Suzanne Klinedt recalls. "We'd come home at three or four in the morning, took her out of bed, and talk to one of his girlfriends on the phone for two hours. I mean, wasn't a guy who's not exactly looking for a quiet evening at home."

"He was always abusive to her, almost like he hated her. One night after work, she thought she was having dinner with him. He was surrounded by all his buddies, and she went up and interrupted him. She grabbed his arm. She wanted to know, in front of all those people, when they were leaving. He was stupid. He pulled his arm away."

"He says, 'You fucking touch me.' To his own wife in front of a whole crowd."

But as miserable as he was, he'd also bring her stuff. He got her the most incredible jewelry. He got her a pink, oval-cut diamond necklace, and she had a six-carat oval-cut diamond surrounded by diamonds. The necklace went south to Mexico and Arizona. And she loved for that. If you were a heifer, that's your god."

"I remember I was watching football," Leary says. "She said, 'I'm going to my sister's.' She wanted to know if I might want some McDonald's on her way home. I said maybe. About halfway, I decided I was going to tell Gen to bring me back some McDonald's."

I called and Barbara said she was at McDonald's getting lunch for Stephanie."

"I said, 'Okay, have her call me when she gets back.'"

"After a half hour, I still haven't heard from her. On that day, Gen had taken my car. It was bigger than mine. I had a mobile phone in my car. So I rang my mobile number just in case. The phone got picked up, but it's a man's voice. Muffled. Covered up. But I know the voice. I've known it all my life. It was Tony's."

"I hung right up. Uh-oh. What the hell do I have here? Just to make sure, I called the number right back, but this time I got the operator saying that the mobile number is not in service at that time."

"I had to go to Las Vegas for a few hours the next day. I told her if she wanted to come, do some shopping. She said she didn't feel like it. She wanted to get a manicure. So off I went while she stayed home."

"When I got back late in the afternoon, she was home, and I noticed her hands."

"Gen, I said, 'You didn't get your manicure?'"

"No," she said. "I didn't feel like it. It was raining."

"When did you do?"

"Oh, nothing. I had lunch with my sister."

"When did you have?"

"And she told me some salad or something."

"And what did Barbara have?"

"She told me what her sister had."

"Okay," I said, 'get your sister on the phone. I want you to ask your sister what she had for lunch.'"

"All right, all right," she says, kind of annoyed. "I didn't have lunch with Barbara."

"Then what were you doing?"

"I was just fooling around with some of my old pals. I know you don't like them, and I didn't want to say."

"I said, 'Look, Gen, the best thing is for me to tell it the way it is. I feel you've been with somebody I know it. We both know it. I just hope it won't with one of two guys.'"

"What two?" she asks, looking me in the eye.

"Tony Spilotro or Joey Casarano," I say. "Just looks at me with a little smile. Gen's, I say, 'than no looking great. You're going to listen to any more guys? You go down the list with me right now, or you're out of here.'"

"She told me it was Tony. No big deal, she said they had been half-housed when it began. I'm hating to her and I'm getting sick inside. She said that they had been seeing each other for six months to a year."

"I told her not to tell Tony. He'd still hold me about it. If Tony suspected I knew, he might think I'd make a beef back home in Chicago, and she and I would both be killed. I knew him. We'd both just disappear. She said she understood. She'd get us all out of this. But she needed a little time to back him out. The plan was to let it out once and smoothly."

"It was the worst-kept secret in town," retired FBI agent Mike Blinn says. "In no time, everybody knew Gen began showing up at the beauty parlor and gym with presents that she and came from her new spouse, which is looking talk for a boyfriend or protector."

Spilotro openly flaunted his relationship with Gen as a show of power," Kent Clifford, the chief of Las Vegas Metro intelligence, says. "He could have had dozens of women younger and prettier than Gen Rosenthal, but power is an aphrodisiac. I'm sure Spilotro felt, I can do it and nobody can do anything about it." It was a stupid thing for him to do."

"I go to Chicago," says Tony's mobster cousin Frank Calton, "and they heard about something. What the fuck is going on out there? you guy says. What's he doing? Fuck the guy's wife?"

"I said, 'I played dumb. I said I didn't know anything about that. When could I say that Tony was fucking Leary's wife and that the FBI and Metro were all over everybody?'"

"Later that night, I was in Kookey's Lounge, and Josine Cerone, the big boss, comes at me at the bar."

"Is there a problem with the Jew guy and his old lady? Jackie calls me that. I think she's all over town. Somebody brought this story back, and the only person I know who could bring the story back was Leary."

"I told Cerone that Leary and his old lady argued all the time, and that's all. Then he looked at me and asked, 'Is the little guy fucking her?'"

"I said no. What could I say? Jackie Cerone was a boss, and he heard both Tony and Leary."

"When I go back to Las Vegas, I told Tony about these questions, and he got hot. We were walking back and forth on West Sahara, and he's got his mouth covered because the FBI was using lip readers with binoculars."

"That fucking Jew motherfucker," he says. "He ran back there and cried. The Jew fuck is gonna start a war."

"I assumed she had fucked Tony off," Leary says, "but I had my home phone bugged. I put the tapes in because when I'd get home and she'd be on the phone, she'd quickly hang up or say 'I'll call you back.'"

"And then, after a couple of days, I heard her talking to Tony on the tapes. He talked very quickly. She'd tell him when I was coming home. Then was after she told me she was going to back him off. After I warned her of the danger and everything, And now I'm listening to her tell Tony with my own ears, planning where they would meet. She was going to get as killed."

"That night, I said, 'Gen, level with me. Are you still seeing our friend?'"

"Don't worry," she says. "It's over."

"I asked, 'Do you have any contact at all with him?'"

"No, don't," she says.

"Are you sure?" I say.

"After all we've been through, I'm surprised you could even talk to the guy."

"Sweet to me," I say.

"Sweet to your son's life."

"She looks right at me. She's angry. I swear on my son's life, she says. 'Now will you stop?'"

"And I took out the recorder, and I pressed the play button, and she heard herself talking to Tony."

"Then that off she screamed at me."

Leary had already begun to divide things up. He'd filed a quitclaim agreement in court separating the assets in preparation for the dissolution of the marriage. According to the terms of the agreement, Leary got almost everything: the house, two undeveloped lots at Las Vegas Country Club Estates, and the couple's four thoroughbred racehorses. But those jewelry-deposit boxes at the First National Bank of Nevada, Strip branch, remained in both their names. According to Rosenthal, he needed someone to have access to the cash if he was under arrest or otherwise unable to get to his own money.

Leary had also gotten Gen to agree that she would have her rights to care, custody and control of their minor children if she engaged in alcohol and/or barbers' work."

"Tony got the idea of whisking Leary," Frank Calton says. "He didn't say Leary's name. He said, 'The Jew. You not sure yet? But if I'm right, I need you to get a guy. You got somebody?' He says, 'I'll set him up, you scoop him. You'll know where the hole's at.'"

"We'd just have to move the plywood, drop him in the hole, and cover it up."

"He says, 'I'll be your knife, but for now I'm not here.'"



JOEY CASARANO (top left) and Tony Leary (right) were the mob's man in Vegas

"Spilotro openly flaunted his relationship with Gen as a show of power," a Vegas cop says. "She also began telling friends about her new sponsor, Tony."

"Frank was scared to death," *Spilotro* says. *Frank* was a pretty proud guy. He never wanted to show his weakness, except the night he called and asked me to come over. That's the first time I ever heard panic in his voice. "Come on over," he said, "I'm bringing a gun." I said, "Don't worry. I'll be right there. And I'll bring my kid's hearing rifle."

"After I got there, he called down, and we were sitting there half asleep when we hear this noise. We jumped up and went outside, and here comes *Gerri*. She was jittery. Her eyes were wild. She was out of it. She didn't even wait for the garage door to lift. She let the door on the bottom."

"I could hear her through the closed windows," *Lefty* says. "I could hear her say, 'Where are my kids, you motherfucker?' I asked her to roll down the window, which she did by about one inch, and I got as close as I could and asked her to cool it."

"Thank you," she answers and puts the car in gear and crashes into the lowered garage door.

"Now the neighbors are all up and they're sounding in the street, and now a couple of cops cars show up at the house. There are two cops there. I know them."

"Gerri starts to the cops and demands that they get me to let her in the house. It's half my house," she says.

"Hey, *Frank*. One of them says, 'why don't you let her in the house? Let her in so we can all go home with her.'"

"I say I'll give her the key if she only stays in there five minutes. Why not? The money, the jewelry, the kids are all elsewhere. There's nothing for her to steal."

"In about three minutes, she's out of the house. I'm in the doorway with *Murray Hershberg* and the cops. She has her hands behind her back. "She says to about ten feet away from me and she needs a gun."

"And she has a pistol aimed at my head. The cops look off. They are back to behind their cars and hid."

"Gerri looks at me and she says, I want my money and jewelry or I'll kill you."

"She's waving the gun all around the place."

"And while pulls up around now but *Nancy Spilotro*."

"Nancy starts talking to Gerri, and she starts taking Gerri's side. I said, Nancy, this is not your problem. You've got your own problems."

"And out of the corner of my eye, I see *Tony Spilotro* drive by real quick. He's wearing a cap and hood."

"The cops are telling Gerri to put the gun down. Nancy tells Gerri to put the gun down. I said, Gerri, don't shoot."

"You don't want to go in the electric chair." "It's almost humorous, it's so sad. Suddenly *Nancy* grabs *Frank*'s arm, and the cops come from behind the car and quickly cuff her. Then I get dumb in the head. I see Gerri with her hands cuffed, and she starts crying. 'Dear,' she says, 'they're hurting me! Don't let them hurt me!'"

"I tell the cops to let her alone. I told them I'm not passing any charges and we've got a house for the gas. The cops left, and we all went into the house. *Gerri* and me and *Murray Hershberg*."

"We were in the kitchen," *Hershberg* says. "Gerri started washing dishes. Like nothing was wrong. She'd sealed down. *Frank* and I were talking, and he looks up at her. She had just named around, as if she's looking for cigarettes, and he says, 'What?'"

"And out of the clear blue sky she said, I just killed *Tony Spilotro*."

"*Frank* said, 'What did you say?'"

"She said, I just killed *Tony Spilotro*."

"He said, 'Shut your mouth!'"

"Then she said she had to make a phone call and didn't want to use any of the phones in the house. She drove away so fast she could hear her bouncing over the speed bumps."

"After she left, we sat around for a few minutes, when he jumped up. That's when he realized that she was going to the bank."

"He said, 'Get in the car.' And me, like a schlemel, I got in."

"We pulled in and there were police all around there. They wouldn't let *Frank* out of the car. They said, 'We're trying to stop any trouble.'"

"*Frank* got very hot. He tried to push through, but they stopped him. They leaned against the car door and we couldn't get out. He looks right at the cops and says, 'Take your fucking hands off my car! She's stealing my money!' and then the cops hold him back until *Frank* took off, but they said, 'Close up about.' The whole thing was an act the cops had concocted with her."

"That night, she called from Beverly Hills," *Lefty* says.

"I said, 'Gerri, this is no good. You can keep your jewelry, but I want my money and my jewelry.' She hung up."

"Then Gerri calls Tony. I only know this because Gerri tells me later."

"She says, 'You better listen to him.' Tony tells Gerri, 'he we've been getting laid.'"

"What do you want me to do, you fucking madcat?" Gerri says.

"So return half the money, jewelry, and his jewelry."

"Tony says 'This is a direct order from me to you.'"

"At the time, Gerri says, she told him, 'Thank you.'"

"Gerri then calls me."

"Your little fucking friend called and gave me an order," she says.

"I said, 'Gerri, you're in very deep.'"

"You got somebody to pick up the money and jewelry?" she asks. "If I give them back, will you leave us alone?"

"I told her yes, and I sent a friend to L.A. to get them. But when he met her, the only guy was *Frank* and the jewelry. Later, she said *Tony* had stolen \$200,000 out of her car when she went to rest at his house after she left the bank."

Rosenthal filed for a divorce on September 5, 1976, three days after Gerri drove away from the bank. Three days later, he got a call from the psychiatric ward of

Harbor General Hospital in Torrance, California. He was told that his wife had been arrested after attempting to strangle on *Ben* under the influence of alcohol and drugs.

Lefty flew to Torrance. "When I got to the hospital, I went into her room, and she was in a straitjacket. She wanted me to loosen it, but I said I couldn't. She started screaming at me. She was hysterical."

Lefty got custody of the children. In return, he agreed to pay \$200,000 a month alimony and give Gerri visitation rights. Gerri kept her antique dolls as jewelry and the Mercedes she drove off to.

Then she moved to an apartment in Beverly Hills. "She was running on a lot of drugs," *Lefty* says. "Lauder, Purge, Druggies. *Idina* she had a boyfriend who was a musician, and he was beating her up a lot."

"After we were divorced, I offered her \$200,000 to change her name, and she said, 'You must be kidding me.' She said the name for whatever she could get. 'Don't you know who I am? Who my husband is?' She used the last name for protection. I'd get calls from bars at one in the morning, and she'd say things like, 'Tell this son of a bitch to leave me alone.'"

Frank Rosenthal, Gerri McGee, and Anthony Spilotro had all reportedly gone to Las Vegas to escape their overbearing lives in different ways. They all succeeded.

"I had just had dinner and gotten in my car," *Lefty* remembers of one night in the fall of 1976. "I don't remember whether or not I turned on the ignition, but the next thing I saw were these little flames. They were only about two or three inches high. They were coming out of the defroister vents. I never heard any noise. I remember I asked myself, 'Why is my car on fire? All I thought was that my car was having some kind of mechanical problem. I didn't panic. I knew I had to get out of the car. There were flames shooting up between the seat and the door. So I used my right hand to grab the door handle, and I threw my shoulder against the door at the same time. It worked."

"I fell out onto the ground. There were flames all around me. Some of my clothes were on fire. I rolled around on the ground and the flames went out. Two men helped me to my feet and got me about twenty or thirty feet from the car. They told me that I got down, and when I did, it was so though the steam bomb had gone off. I saw my car jump about two feet into the air, and then flames shot up through the roof about two stories high."

"That's when I realized it hadn't been an accident. There's what I knew somebody put a bomb in my car."

A friend argued to investigate the blast said, "A bomb like this should have killed him. Except, in this model of Cadillac Eldorado, the manufacturer installed a steel

floor plate beneath the driver's seat for added protection. The plate deflected the bomb toward the rear of the car instead of forward. He should change his name from *Lefty* to *Lucky*."

At first, the FBI believed the bombing was tied to the low triangle. Later, it was learned that a mob boss in the Midwest believed Rosenthal had named himself a second advisor.

Then, about a month later, early on November 6, 1976, Gerri Rosenthal began screaming on the sidewalk in front of the Beverly Sunset Motel, on Sunset Boulevard, and stumbled into the lobby, where she collapsed. She died these days later at Cedars-Sinai Hospital. She was forty-one. The hospital said doctors found evidence of tranquilizers, liquor, and other drugs in her system. There was a large bruise on her thigh and scuff marks on her legs. A captain of the Los Angeles district attorney's office told the *Los Angeles Times*, "We're interested because of her past connections and the possibility of any organized-crime entanglements." The doctor who pronounced her dead said, "Total play is not ruled out."

Gerri was buried in Mount Sinai Memorial Park in a private ceremony. *Lefty* and their two children did not attend. "I didn't want to put the kids through this," he said.

In January of 1975, the L.A. County coroner said that the death was accidental, an apparently linked combination of cocaine, Valium, and Jack Daniel's whiskey.

Papers on file in Los Angeles Probate Court said: "The deceased died leaving no real property but left personal property consisting of numerous cars located in various bars over First Interstate Bank, Maryland Square Office, 300 South Maryland Parkway, Los Vegas. The cars were ordered appraised by the court and valued at \$24,450."

Half the estate in the box went to *Lefty*, under the terms of the divorce agreement; the other half went divided evenly among Gerri's three children: Robin, Steven, and Stephanie. According to court papers, her last record was July 1976.

Three years later, in June of 1979, two bodies were found buried in a wooded area in Inglewood, about six miles from Chicago. Their faces were so badly disfigured that it required a fingerprint check to identify them as *Anthony Spilotro* and his brother *Michael*. Both men had been beaten to death.

The murders were never solved, though authorities believe that Chicago mobsters wanted to silence *Anthony Spilotro*, who was facing three major criminal trials, including one for murdering a witness.

Frank Rosenthal retired peacefully, living in a house on a golf course in a wealthy community in Boca Raton, Florida, where he helps his nephew run a nightclub.



"Gerri twirls around," *Lefty* recalls, "and she has a pistol aimed at my head. She looks at me and says, 'I want my money and my jewelry or I'll kill you.'"



OLD MARRIED FOLKS. Three days after *Lefty* filed for divorce, Gerri was in a straitjacket.

The Big Tie-In

WELL, *Shogun Girl* is a hit," we said to our friend Elizabeth Berkley, the star of the film.

"Yes," she agreed. "Now we have to get cracking on the ancillary-product sales."

"Will there be a hit?" we asked.

"Scada," she replied. "*Shogun Girl* coloring books. *Shogun Girl* lunch boxes. A *Shogun Girl* breakfast cereal. *Shogun Girl* soap on a rope. And then there's the ride."

"Ride?"

"Yes," she said. "All big movies get turned into rides. *Jaws* and *King Kong* at Universal Studios. *Star Wars* at Disney World. *Indiana* at Great Adventure."

"Gosh, what would a *Shogun Girl* ride be like?"

"You start at one end," she explained, "go nearly straight up, over a rise, drop, swoop, plateau, go over some bumpy areas, then plunge. Can I help you visualize it?"

"Aha!" we soon said. "But who would build it?"

"Disney," she said.

"This doesn't seem like your average Disney World attraction."

"Not Disney in Orlando," she corrected us. "The new Disney complex in Times Square."

"Could work," we agreed.

"But remember," she said, "riders must keep their hands inside at all times."

PHOTOGRAPH BY TIMOTHY WHITE

Styling by Wayne Greifender

Hair by Charles for Paul Harvey Cozzani, New York; Makeup by Susan Barling for Shis Limoni; Jewelry (Cape, Earrings, Jeweled Sash, Earrings) by Moschino; Earrings, Bracelets, an Emerald-and-ruby earrings, from Cartier; Brace, Brace, from Bland of London



DEEPAK CHOPRA

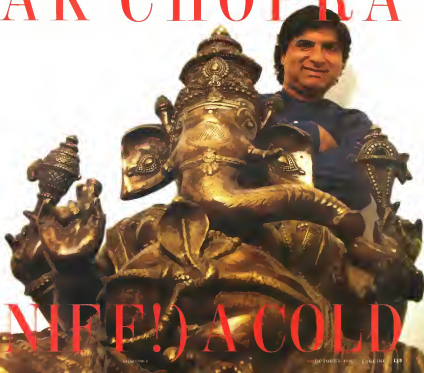
To the millions who buy his books, lecture videos, and herbal remedies, he is a one-man healing machine. So why does the prophet of perfect health have a runny nose?

NOW THAT religion operates in the shadow of science, it's not a trial in the wilderness that establishes the prophet. It's a medical degree. The doctor is in his shop around the stage of a New Jersey hotel ballroom. He is dressed in a handsome brown suit, a crisp white shirt, and brown suede shoes (Dorcas Karan is his favorite designer). There is a gleam in his sea-of-beans eyes, which may grow to his periodically bathing them in distilled water; there is an expressiveness in his manner, which he credits to hours of daily meditation. He sips lemon-garnished water to clear his silver throat. Once a month, he fasts; he observes forty-eight hours of silence; he goes four hundred penkilams (mantras, chiefly sutras to ensure disconnection of his coils, and, by means of warm sesame oil, dropped onto his forehead, attains a nose of unflappable bliss.

There are more than four hundred people in the audience. They have paid

\$900 each to attend this journey to the boundless seas: three days of vegetarian food, yoga in a chair, and lectures by the man they know as a one-time endocrinologist and former hospital chief of staff who is now the foremost champion of mind/body medicine in the country. Deepak Chopra, M.D., always seemed to be a wiser and an acuter and a physician, and now, at forty-eight, he's all those—an authentic triple threat—who can walk from research on cholesterol levels in codified lab notes to the extant verse of the great Bengali poet Rabindranath Tagore.

"Health is a higher state of awareness," he is saying in his gleaming lecture session. The idea is his lecture, dressed from the Vedic proposition that matter comes from consciousness, not consciousness from matter. He speaks loudly without notes, extracting from the material in his books an encyclopaedic knowledge of amazing facts about the body, Indian philosophy, and broadened Western medicine, which, he has said, "wonders in a



By Chip Brown

HAS (SNIFF!) A COLD

"With every breath, you take in air to the twenty-second power of atoms from the universe, and when you breathe out, you expel ten to the twenty-second number of atoms. You're literally breathing out pieces of heat, lodestones and little rain. In one year, you replace 60 percent of the atoms in your body. The raw material of your DNA comes and goes every six weeks. You make a new liver of skin every month. You manufacture a stomach lining every week. You replace the cells of your liver every forty-five days. Your blood contains the most sophisticated pharmacy in nature."

blows a prodigious quantity of steam
across into his palm. Does Deepak
Chopra have a cold? Can Deepak Chopra
have a cold? If free-breathing health is
a higher state of consciousness, does
mucus signify some sort of spiritual
obstruction?

When Emerson questions and physically challenges those who go with the territory, Chopin rejects the expectation that a stand-bye champion be finer than his followers. He doesn't want to be, for example, a prophet, a guru, or any kind of disengaged new-age pioneer. Since relocating to La Jolla in 1993 and deciding not to apply for a California land and license, he's decided he doesn't even want to be a doctor. He wants to be free to think, ramble, gesticulate, and wear boots without the MD on his byline—a credential his publishers are loath to drop.

And, simply, he is saying now, it's not a cold, it's chronic nasal congestion, a natural result of his body type. He's a *kapla*. *Ayurveda*, the five-thousand-year-old traditional medicine of India, says *kapla*s are typically plagued by nasal congestion. That seems to please all but a few science-minded *kilipils* and *medica cars*. Hoping to restore the mystique of common sense, which he has spent the last three hours inventing, he offers a story. "Once, a woman came up to me after a lecture," he says. "She was very intelligent. She said, 'How dare you, Dr. Chopra, you, the Hindu! How dare you have a cold!'"

IT TOOK THOUSANDS of years to get theology out of Western medicine. Now God is back. On some skin to God, going under the name "spirituality." Where (again, *anecdotes are!*) clanking their heads and deifying the sufferer of magical medicines, age rights, and out-of-body experiences, they're gathering in diaphanous academies to ridicule new costs like Chopin who want to restore the spiritual element to Western medicine. Things aren't a fair like the public clamoring to return to the shamanism of prehistoric cultures in which bacterial infections were diagnosed as possession by evil spirits, but there does seem to be a new mysticism about

bore of the sense that medical science doesn't have all the answers. To many people, the philosophy of secular materialism on which Western medicine rests seems limited, reductive, pygmy—a kind of fundamentalism of its own in that it refuses to give any credence to the idea that emotional concepts like faith and hope and power can have a role in healing.

When you get stuck in the firework of Western medicine, it's just the lack of the glow, it's something that just happens to you, like a lit bug or a hurricane or fate. Your consciousness, your "spirit," your sense of self, are beside that point, the glow in the machine plays no part. When you get stuck in the firework of many alternative medicines, it may be something that just happens to you, like bad luck or fate, but it can also be a clearing, a test of spirit, and, at some metaphysical level, even a way in which the soul—the spirit or whatever—has chosen to express itself, to correct some error, to make some sweeping change. Energy for permaculture advocates, fitness for Western trends, but no meaning (which can be useful if the meaning you would otherwise derive is negative and self-deflating), adding to the repair the mark of gold or blame), illness under the alternative paradigms can often have too much



It is this notion of a ghost in the machine that has been swirling Deepa Chopra most of her life. It confounded him when he was a boy of six and saw his grandfather's talent fade from life to death. It inspired existential discussions in medical school and haunted his work when he had a private practice full of patients in America and medical students of his own at Tufts, Boston University, and Harvard. When he eventually began to write about the role of the spirit in health, he achieved the sort of success he could scarcely have dreamed of—rich, fame, influence. Hollywood friendships, a steadily growing fanbase, and a host of best-

his role as front man for the band.

where he is not accompanied by a cash register and his products—books from his bookstore, aromatic oils, audio- and videotapes, food supplements, tongue scrapers? Chappas always displays the role of prophet-priest-patron, but he's also the most self-advertising for his medicine. He has written dozens of books in two years, among them, *Heal Your Body*, *Quantum Healing*, *Conscious Healing*, *Chakra Healing*, and *Acupuncture*. Retired doctor. (A few and evocative writer who maintains his style by writing through his nose, playing the flute, and listening to New Age music.) The author, who has sold 90,000 to 100,000 self-help books, his low book, *Heal Your Body* has maintained 120,000 recovery fee languages. His regular *Acupuncture* *Timeline* Mind sold more than one million copies in April 1997. *Timeline* Mind is a single day following a hour he spent discussing "the physicality of immortality" with Oprah Winfrey, whom he had

through his pal Michael Jackson, whom he had met through Elizabeth Taylor, whom he had been introduced to by George Harrison, whose ballad path he'd crossed as a result of some unreleased White Fantasy LPs last spring, a slender distillation of practical philosophy called *The Seven Years' Love of Socrates* vaulted onto the nonfiction best-seller lists—500,000 copies now in print. In July, Chopin's first novel, an update of the Arthurian legend called *The Return of Merlin* reached the fiction best-seller lists, making him one of the few authors ever to be on both lists at the same time.

And there are microscopes, audiocassettes, and cassettes of Chopra repeating the verses of the Bhagavad Gita in the resonant voice that once landed him a spot reading the *Upanishads* news on All India Radio. Cassettes of his bookie feature songs by George Harrison with lyrics that quote Chopra on healings ("When I heard the messages from some space"). Chopra's first company, Quantum Leap, has sold more than 1 million last year by sponsoring workshops and selling dietary products and herbal food supplements. Like the nonlocal field of energy and information that connects what he calls the cosmic mind, he, too, seems everywhere at once, a study in the art of ubiquity in bookstores, cyberpace, PRS documentaries, even the lampen classrooms of the Learning Academy for those not so glib or so people like a co-conspirator with a few health care professionals in the United States. He's heard and seen by the Medical Association, which Chopra once claims for the drug industry.

His travels to India through time are a prelude to the boundless wealth of therapies and teachers he has discovered in the Spine courses. He leads as a long health professional in the principles of manual care. Two years ago, he moved from Boston to the area to become the director of the Spine Institute, Physical and Mind-Body Medicine under the largest health-care consortium in California. He actually offers the same program to the woman well beyond the grossly ill and thus—was a recently retired Julia and became more financially successful—she had a real gateway for countless of Hollywood's health Spine Institute with a vision from the Institute of Health to research Ayurveda, the focus on the campaign to move from the medicine of

EVER SINCE MY LIFE became spiritual, my life has been spared." Despite Chopra's saying he was sitting on the upper balcony of his house in La Jolla, a magnificent decked structure that is pitched like a grounded cruise ship on the side of a noine, all white and curvilinear with gleaming rails and balconies and that airy, idyllic feel of California fantasy, his wife of twenty-five years, brought out cups of coffee and Indian tea. He had been up for hours, scribbling in his blue notebook. He'd meditated and taken a walk in the small pool. A million years, Pacific Islanders were rafting under a heavy log. It was a world away from New Delhi, where Chopra

DEEPAK CHOPRA SEEMS EVERYWHERE AT ONCE: IN bookstores, in cyberspace, in PBS documentaries. There's hardly a forum he's not partial to, except maybe the AMA, which he once called "a prostitute for the drug industry."



grew up, the older son of a prominent cardiologist. His father, Krishna, was the dean of a local hospital and his younger brother, Sanyal—now a doctor and an associate professor of medicine at Harvard—enjoyed the privileges of a military affiliation (age and peacock-hair suits, events in the officers' pool). They played cricket and polo. They put on tuxedos and a shirt and tie for dinner. Their schooling was firmly in the tradition of the rig as well. They read *Tennyson* and *Shakespeare* and P. G. Woodhouse. Dr. Dasgupta memorized the streets of London. Every summer, the family took a house in the country, and

In high school, Chagnon asked, wrote poetry, and was a church drummer and essay writer. In the fever of youth, he wrote a book of poems, *Myself and the World*, which he saved from that pit of cynicism by the inspiring example of the neurosurgeon in Sinclair Lewis's novel *Anthem*. After graduation, Chagnon went directly to the All India Institute of Medical Sciences, much to his father's delight. He was seventeen. His new supplies included a human skeleton, which he bought for four dollars, and a human brain, which cost him about a buck. He observed the brain alone in a jar, as if it were what you were put underground in a box for ten days and who, and also upon catarrhs, underwent a battery of tests that showed the impressive physiological effects of resistance on heat and metabolism. During his medical studies, Chagnon found that he was just as interested in reading *manicure and pedicure in anatomy and physiology* as he was in reading *the anatomy of the brain*. He would call, if for lack of any other expression, the *interesting* life, he said, "fun and appreciate what that."

When he graduated, he spent six months treating villagers in rural India. And then, at twenty-three, he got a job in America at a four-hundred-bed community hospital in Plainfield, New Jersey. The hospital had been looking to fill

Let's Get Metaphysical



Chopin in 1868, in his role as friend
man for Maharshi Mahesh Yogi

CHOPRA BEGAN TO SHOUT. "YOU HAVE NO RIGHT TO ASK me a question unless I grant you the privilege! Hundreds of people want to ask me questions! You are one of them! Who are you?"



halls in a medical staff deployed by the Vietnam War, he was offered a nine-month internship. Deepak and Rita, whom he had just married, landed at Kennedy Airport in July 1970, practically penniless. They were taken from the airport to the hospital by helicopter.

"It was like *Alvin Karpisland*," he recalled. Rooms had been arranged for them at a run-down hotel. When they went for a stroll down the main drag, they were dumbstruck by the plethora of color TVs in the stores. "I hadn't watched television in twenty years. I'd never seen a color TV. I watched *Wonderland* on TV, and I saw green grass. I was amazed. We went into one of the stores, and the fellow said, 'You can pay for the TV over two years.' I said, 'You're kidding.' 'No, you can do that,' he said. I said to Rita, 'If this is the way you get stuff in America, let's go buy a car.' In two days, I was completely assimilated into the American system."

Three years later, at the age of twenty-two, when most would-be American doctors are still in medical school, Chopra was hired as an internist in internal medicine and endocrinology. He'd landed a teaching and research fellowship in endocrinology at a hospital affiliated with Tufts, but he was so bored by the medical world and working for a man with a big reputation and a disagreeable personality, he quit. "Misable people can become superb scientists," he said. "They're caught up in their own world. The people who are often the most out of touch with reality are academics and doctors. I was very uneasy about where I was headed."

Nevertheless, medicine was his thing. He moonlighted in emergency rooms in the Boston area. He spent a year at a hospital in Everett, Massachusetts. He joined New England Memorial Hospital, and by thirty-five, he was chief of staff. He had three dozen patients in wards, a dozen in intensive care, he was taking two hundred calls a day. He couldn't match the names of patients with their faces. He was writing

articles, smoking a pack of cigarettes a day, and drinking Scotch to relax. "I had a major problem," he recalled. "I got fed up. I said to Rita, 'We're going to stop all this and change.'"

The existential questions he'd expected someone would answer were troubling him more than ever. Western medicine seemed baffled by the unexplainable of health. Why Chopra wondered, was job satisfaction the number-one indicator for predicting premature death in people with coronary disease? Why did more people die at nine on Monday morning than at any other time? Monday is no different from Tuesday or any other day. If ideas could be the cause of the angers of death and disease, he thought, maybe they could be the harbingers of health as well. He'd grown increasingly concerned that he wasn't doing enough for patients—that the medicine he'd been trained to master the core of their problems. What was needed, he thought, was a medicine that incorporated the spiritual element. He found it in India, of all places, in the person of a guru and in the form of a tradition he'd abandoned when he went to the West.

IF MILLIONS OF AMERICANS have at least a passing interest in the traditional Indian medicine known as Ayurveda—Sanskrit for "science of life"—Deepak Chopra can take the credit. His

books have lifted the ancient wisdom of the rishis—sages—from obscurity and popularized a medical philosophy that is more spiritually based than the biochemical model of Western medicine but falls short of, say, Christian Science, to which the mind is considered totally sovereign and all illness is thought to arise from deficits in belief. Ayurveda holds that functions of the body are governed by three biological humors called *doshas*—*pitta*, *kapha*, and *aira*—and that illness is caused by an imbalance in the *doshas*. Imbalances occur to be another way of saying that the flow of energy through the body is disrupted. The disruptions are caused by the stresses of life and the buildup of body wastes from a bad diet or unhealthy habits. Practitioners diagnose illness by reading a patient's radial pulses. They treat problems with herbs and dietary changes and by detoxifying the body with massages and saunas. Meditation is the most important tool in Ayurveda, for it works on the body and the mind simultaneously. The theory is that health is a higher state of consciousness and higher states of consciousness will naturally promote health.

For Western doctors trained in germ theory, a medical system that was formed before the invention of antibiotics and the discovery of penicillin and that does not focus on the disease-causing role of bacteria or viruses is a tough sell, to say the least. "Ayurvedic doctors take health by body type—it's total bullshit," says Dr. Stephen Barrett, a noted author and health-food crusader. "Your body type can change from hour to hour. They claim they can tell your body type just from your pulse. I would like to set up an experiment where Chopra would take a pulse without being able to see the patient."

Growing up in India, Chopra had given little thought to Ayurveda as anything but a mishmash of folk remedies and superstitions. His medical education, like Barrett's, was steeped in materialist philosophy. People are physical machines that have learned to think. The mind is trapped in

the brain. There is an objective world independent of the person interpreting it. Consciousness is a byproduct of physiology. "Mind, sex, and suffering and death are inevitable."

But he was never happy to do that. He looked at studies that pointed to the efficacy of Ayurvedic treatments, particularly in arthritic-related diseases, and took note of the well-researched physiological and psychological benefits of yoga and meditation. What really caught his interest was a trip he took to New Delhi in 1968, when a friend took him to meet Dr. Harshad Dev Thigara, a master Ayurvedic physician. Thigara asked Chopra if he meditated. Chopra had recently read a book about TM—transcendental meditation—tried it, and found that it helped him quit cigarettes and improved his attitude toward his busy career. "I began to feel the weight of my own pulse," he recalled. Thigara said Chopra had "too many thoughts" and "too many deadlines." He advised him to cut across to ten solid seconds each morning and to spend more time with his wife and two children. He said he should move his bowels regularly, chew food more slowly, and spend five minutes sitting quietly before dozing off to work. Knowing that any account of the visit would sound ridiculous, Chopra nonetheless wrote about it in his autobiography, convinced that the Ayurvedic physician had seen deeply into him and that the consultation had been of tremendous benefit, a piece of preventive medicine. (He never did take the second, though.)

In Washington, D.C., in 1969, Chopra was introduced to Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, the guru of the TM movement who had spent two years of meditation in a cave in India before attempting to champion world peace, levitation, and enlightenment through meditation. Chopra's skepticism of the "gargling guru" evaporated in the man's presence. "At a point very early in our meeting," he wrote in *Science of the Mind*, "I noticed that my own attention, exposed to his, had become very concentrated.... There wasn't the usual reaction of many impressionists—just silence. This seemed an extraordinarily pleasant state to be in, because I felt completely unself-conscious." The maharishi had been promoting a distillation of Ayurvedic medicine and marketing products under the brand name *Maharishi Ayur-Veda*. Chopra was the perfect alchemist for such a venture: a charismatic, Western-trained physician who had a talent for advocacy and could hold his own to doctors. He was knowledgeable enough to combine the very old teachings of the rishis with very new research from scientists studying the immune system. And he was poetic enough to fashion some highly romantic speculations about the connection between quantum mechanics and the nature of consciousness. Chopra founded the American Association for Ayurvedic Medicine and took over as medical director of the maharishi's flagship Ayurvedic clinic in Lancaster, Massachusetts.

In 1980, Chopra gave up his two lucrative endocrinology practices to write and champion his revamped vision of the human body and health. His most costs were paid for by a TM company. He continued to see patients but did not charge them—he said in *Right Heart* that in a five-year period he treated two thousand patients with Ayurveda and treated one hundred physicians in his theory and practice. "I have not abandoned my *exiles*, conventional training, but extended it," he says. But he had embraced the idea that the mind is not limited to the confines of the brain and that there is no objective world, only the world people create in the act of perceiving it. At the chemistry of the body—the body itself—he believed—was a product of one's awareness. "We are the ones

who generate the reality—the abstracts who manufacture observations." He would tell students over and over.

Chopra's new prescription for the woes of modern life was wonderfully simple: meditation, dietary change, and adherence to ancient medical-oriented laws. Simple measures like going to bed earlier and meditating and eating big lunches that touched on all six tastes (salty, sweet, sour, bitter, pungent, astringent) could enhance the body's healing responses, Chopra claimed—could even slow the signs of aging, such as changes in bone density, aerobic capacity, muscle mass, and HDL-cholesterol and testosterone levels. The body was a process, not an object, it would run right if it was understood by itself. "True healing is the loss of self," Chopra was saying now on the balcony of his home in Ashland. He looked nervous, but I think through meditation I've achieved the loss of self. A few years ago, on a flight from Bombay to Delhi, as soon as we took off, three of the four engines went out. The flight attendant started sobbing, and the pilot's voice was tremulous; you could hear a pin drop in the cabin. I was wondering to see if I felt fear, and I swore to God I did not. The plane landed safely, and then there was total hysteria. I sat there until everybody left, and then I got out and took the next flight to Delhi."

In May 1993, Chopra, along with Thigara and Hari Swami, a Western-trained physician from Ohio State University, coauthored an article about Ayurveda in the prestigious *Journal of the American Medical Association*. The piece discussed the Ayurvedic theories and reviewed promising herbal medicines and therapies. It was a coup for the TM movement as well as for the TM movement and alternative medicine as a whole, but it promptly drew a flood of "jealous bileful" letters. Some, such as those that branded TM a cult, were less scathing than the ones that faulted the science. Chopra et al. had marshaled in support of Ayurveda, "It doesn't help to have proponents of unproven claims pushing them for profit while expecting others to look into their validity. Do the authors consider this type of fraud to be ethical?" asked a physician from Texas. In reply, Chopra and his coauthors cited research showing the benefits of meditation called from some one hundred peer-reviewed scientific journals over more than twenty years. JAMA subsequently staged an article that depicted Chopra and Maharishi as the authors of a marketing scheme, the work of a commercially driven man promoting the unscientific health claims of a fraudulent guru. Chopra was shocked for failing to disclose to JAMA his financial interest in the herbal products he was touting. Two TM groups and Chopra filed a \$44 million libel suit against JAMA but later dropped the case.

Still, he was strong by his own terms, and in the wake of the lawsuit with JAMA, he broke with the TM movement and with his spiritual father. "Maharishi never let you tell me I should stop writing books and doing workshops," Chopra recalled. "I should continue any work you and you have in premeditation or love. He said, 'If you give a choice, the one stay with the one, not me.' I said, 'I'll give you 120,000 twenty-four hours to think about it.' I said, 'I don't need twenty-four hours. I need twenty seconds.' I left. He apologized on the phone later."

JUST WHEN YOU'RE thinking that Deepak Chopra's week-long Reduction of the Spirit meditation training in Tampa might be better at swaying the biology of cynicism than mounting a seduction of the spirit, and that maybe it would be better to go watch the sunset spoonable on Tampa Bay

Jimmy Carter doesn't care if you think he's the best ex-president the country's ever had or a bitter old meddler out to undermine U. S. foreign policy. He's a Peacemaker, dammit! This month, we'll see if the Nobel judges agree.

EYES ON THE PRIZE

BY GREGORY JAYNES

"At the risk of antagonizing you—" I begin to say.

"There's no way," Jimmy Carter interrupted.

"You mean better men than I have tried?"

Carter smiled. The things he has seen with that smile.

"Have you thought about the Nobel Peace Prize today, I mean before this very moment as I bring it up?"

"No. I haven't thought about it today."

ON COMMERCIAL FLIGHTS, JIMMY CARTER and his wife, Rosalynn, and their Secret Service detail are the first to board the plane, from the terrace, so they don't make a fuss in the passenger's waiting bay. If you fly out of Atlanta a lot, sooner or later you will see them on Delta, first class, bulkhead, starboard side. Rosalynn on the aisle, the two of them in our expensive leather chairs, smiling. [Carter has just finished his first term as president.] Once things are pretty much settled but before he can possibly get in the way of the operation, Carter rises and walks the length of the plane, shaking every hand. He used to say, "Hi, I'm Jimmy Carter," as he did when he was a stranger campaigning for political office, but by now he recognizes that introducing himself is an unnecessary

Thinking back, acting global. Even before he was president, his smile, a habit, said, "There is no test just to come back to Plains."



"It just happens that our forays were highly publicized last year," Carter says. "They involved our government. They were in the West. **They were white folks.** So people cared."



Nobel nomination #7: The day he gets the award, Carter heads on a hat in Crested Butte, Colorado.

way for reconciliation. It doesn't have to be publicized. A phone call. A postcard. Go down the street and knock on their door.

"We shouldn't carry our resources around in a jar and use a machine dropper to expend them. We should give what we have for His glory, not for our own. That's difficult for me. Mary did a grace thing, an intimate thing, an embarrassing thing. She went too far. How can we break through our shell and do some-

Afterward, if you brought a camera, you could go out in to the piers, go to that surrounds the church and expect to be joined for all time standing next to the only man who is said to have regarded the presidency as a stepping stone. Invariably, while they are posing with him, people tell Carter he ought to be president again. He smiles the thought away. It is the last thing he would want. He was rid of it and as he tells us the day we quit him. As Heriberto Hernandez, a New Jersey editor and a Carter speechwriter, said in a talk at the LBJ Library in Austin, Texas: "We tried a once. It didn't work."

I MOVED TO GEORGIA from Tennessee in 1960. Clay passed with the rest of the population in those days. As a Negro was a source of liberal thought. The newly elected governor backed him (the guy in the Klan) half-dollar, everybody said so. The first sentence of his inaugural address was "The true test of segregation is now." Of course, the lieutenant governor was Lester Maddox, the old boy who had beat Carter four years before (but couldn't) by long success himself. Carter himself hadn't met the latest campaign of the country—left of Jimmy Williams, yes, but still there were social signs. Two reminders to me who that capital in 1960, even though the body of Martin Luther King Jr. lay enshrined for two years in the Georgia dome. There are no photographs of Carter with King (Georgia's only Nobel Peace Prize winner, so to say) because the two never met. They could have, only, but Carter was what and politically ambitious. Well, sleeping days and all that. He did what he had to do. You know he was a good man.

When Carter was governor, I was a reporter and had to deal with him now and again. Twenty-five years later, on my way to his office, the one thing I remembered was that when he says he will give you an hour, he might make a loss, but he won't make it more. As I sat outside an Andy Warhol trip-tych of Carter on the wall behind his door, I heard

"All the best! All the best! I'm off to the airport!" It is the cry of the Cancer Center, as former diplomats, now em-

most apt to live in Plains), but he earned a vend and filled it. Earlier this year, to effect a cease-fire in the twelve-year-old civil war in Sudan, Carter met the Sudanese his son, Chio,

Carver has just gotten off the phone with Chap when he is shown into his office. Chap told his daddy it was no big deal. He was in southern Sudan and that he couldn't understand why anybody would want such scorched earth, much less fight for it. Before hanging up, Carver had wished his son happy birthday. Chap was forty-five. He had a wife and two children and lived in Decatur, Georgia. He hadn't asked for this assignment. He just woke up one day two weeks before his birthday and learned that his father had superseded any possible middle crisis he may have been nursing to move him into the Sudanese

Carter had needed to get into southern Sudan during the usual two-month dry season to reach the last, but not least, of his goals—about 100,000 cases of guinea-worm disease. There were 35 million cases in 1976, when the Carter Center decided to eradicate it. The last donor the world eradicated was smallpox, eighteen years ago. Typical Carter, as biographer Brinkley puts it—“he can’t just mope for fighting it, he has to eliminate. To get into Sudan and distribute the films that will save the people from these disgusting, crippling worms, Carter had to stop a war between Muslims and non-Muslims that has claimed 13 million lives. To show how serious he was, Carter put up Chip. The culture was important. The war, too.”

I would get to Chgo, but I didn't want to peak early. I opened with a question that had nagged me since I drove west to eat across Georgia to catch him in church. I had noticed every Georgian had a pond. People would dig a moat around a double-wide and call it a pond. "Mr. President, I will leave with what sounds like a freedom question."

Carter: "It won't be the first."

"What does a pond mean to a man from south Georgia?"
"If you flew over Georgia, say, at five-thousand-foot altitude, in almost any part of our state you would see almost one hundred ponds at any time. Because everyone wants to have access to a pond or proximity to a pond. And I mean have had that question asked before, about why that's true."

I had intended merely to reprimand, but Carter, being Carter, he reached into himself and responded with staggering eloquence.

"In fact, it's fascinating to me. The first thing I'll do tomorrow morning when I get up is go out to my pond. We built that pond in '93. I think one thing is that this is a unique opportunity for us to fish. And there's a fascinating culture of growing fish. And everybody brags on the quality of their pond, like we used to brag in the Depression years on the quality of our bird skin."

Four people all over the world have looked on fish as a major supplement to their diet. When I was growing up in the Depression years, every creek—even a creek as wide as that creek you're sitting on—would have a deer, worn path or both sides, where fishermen walked up and down.

"And it's an engineering challenge to find a nice place to build a pond where it's least expensive and most beneficial. There's a very strong element of cost-benefit ratio here. And I would guess that if you ever—I don't know if you own any land or not—but if you ever own 25 acres or 250 acres or whatever, my guess is that before very many months go by, you would be contemplating working on building a pond."

In his life, Carter must have given fifty thousand interviews. If you are going to open, then, with a question he has never been asked (implausible, you say, but it happens, as you see), you might want to consider a subject a little loftier than my choice. When Carter was done thinking through the meaning of ponds, we are back to his son Chip's mission.

"I was afraid that he might be kind of disconcerted, but we called him and I explained that I had promised that he would go to Sedan."

"What was Chip's reaction?"

"We said, you mean me? I don't know enough about the culture of Sudan to understand how important a son is to some cultures, it's almost like me being there. So Chaps there, I think it is one of the more dramatic negotiations we have been in, and I think the Sudanese war is the worst one in the world! I've said this for the last five years. But the bottom line is the United States is not interested in Sudan. Once our country gets down on a leader or a regime, then nothing they do has any legitimacy, or anything they do is insane and everything their opponents do is angelic. It's a basic, black-and-white definition."

"What would you do with you if you were president?"
"I would call on me more."

HE IS JUST AS THIN-RIMMED as he ever was. He can cite you chapter and verse on criticism. He seems particularly irritated by the perception of him as a man who accepts precipitously "What I think people don't want to understand is that I don't embrace as a sensitive nation without getting permission from the president. And everything I do is on the basis of my understanding and ability is completely compatible with U.S. policy. And that says a great statement on us."

just happens that last year, contrary to our general inclination, those forays were highly publicized. They did involve our government. They were in the Western World. They were white folks. So people cared."

But most of his missions are in places the United States doesn't give a happy dance about. "In the Third World, I'm a hero," Carter says. "I'm not bragging to you, but when I go to Africa, they know that I'm one guy they can depend on."

Here is where I decided to bring up the Nobel. It is not preposterous to think that he is running for it. The second trip to Man, for example, was not entirely necessary. I once begged him to come, least of all Anusheh Even Doug Bradley, an acknowledged cheerleader, was disillusioned as a witness. "This was a loss for Carter, wasn't it?" he had asked me bluntly as we flew out of Port-au-Prince. "There wasn't any great outpouring for the answer, was there? And he doesn't like losing. Look at what he's done with a complete repudiation by the American electorate. He's out there running for second presidency."

Laurence Elie Wiesel nominated him for the Nobel that year. I asked him if he thinks about it much.

"I don't. That's not something that obsesses me at all. Although this is one of the things that people like to say, that I go to the jungles of Sudan to eradicate games worse so that I can get a Nobel prize. It certainly would be nice to get a Nobel prize, but that's not a dream. Game is my life."

Then Carter said, "I've got to go." He rose, saying, "I've enjoyed this." He had him for one hour and thirty-two seconds. He was on his way to Warm Springs, Georgia, to the house where Franklin Delano Roosevelt had been plinned of a "terrible pain in the back of my head" on one very day fifty years before and died of a cerebral hemorrhage. Roosevelt was the last Democrat this country saw fit to reflect to the presidency. Carter was to receive an award that day; the Four Freedoms award. A lifetime speaker, man appointed, was Bill Clinton.

President Johnson wasn't there like Carter, he was there because his picture and the ceremony would be on the front page of *The New York Times* the next day. Carter was in the photograph, unidentified. When Clinton was introduced, everyone—about five thousand people—stood and applauded. After a notable clap, Carter sat down, stage left of Clinton. The applause continued and continued. Everyone continued standing. Carter, across before all, reached his nose, ran his tongue into the hollow of his cheek, looked at a small light rolling in from yonder. He did not look at the president, and he did not stand again.

When it was Carter's turn to speak, he was brief. He said the last time he was in Warren Springs it was to announce his own candidacy for president. He said he was a misbegotten, the only FDR, deal, and he cried. He said, "I was just a farm boy. I can remember distinctly when hogs sold for one cent a pound. Cows were five cents a pound. But perhaps most important, pennies were a penny a pound." Roosevelt, he said, "transformed my life." He said he was "eternally grateful." And he sat back down, five feet from the remains of the United States of America.

That morning, Carter had told me: "I rarely talk to Clinton. Although I'm a loyal Democrat, one of the sterling improvements of the Carter Center is that we're totally non-partisan. I deal just as easily with Dole and Gingrich as I do with the Democratic leadership. Not because I need them. I don't need anybody. What could anybody do for me?"

No one should live through the Holocaust only to die of longing. An old-fashioned romance.

LAST TEA WITH THE ARMORERS

BY MARK HELPRIN

IT SEEMED TO THE INSTRUCTRESS that the tall red-haired Australian in her class would never, could never, properly pronounce a single word of Hebrew, and so, she began with unusual care for the sound of things. "Let's start," she said, "with the place where we find ourselves." The first word is not pronounced, as it is spelled, like the English word but, rather like the name of the currency of Thailand. Who can tell me what that is?

Although the Canadian, Australian, South African, and British in the class did not know the Australian did, and he pronounced it perfectly—perhaps not perfectly in Thai, but perfectly in Hebrew: "Bate," he said, shyly.

"Very good," said the instructress, beginning to relax. "Bate, with a deep *a* and a partially whistled, slightly shaded to the next word. And the next word is Gollim, the H-y-m of which are pronounced as are the letters in the English word glom, as in the glom of the waves at Bat Gallim."

She made the class say these individually and then in unison, "the glom of the waves at Bat Gallim, the glom of the waves at Bat Gallim—the glom of the waves at Bat Gallim."

"What does it mean?" asked a Canadian girl.

"Waves" said the Australian, pronouncing the word almost like waves.

"Waves?" the Canadian girl asked.

"That's right," the Australian answered, "daughters of the waves," but, as he pronounced it, "daughters of the woves."

"Woves," the teacher said, correcting the Australian not in Hebrew, which he had pronounced perfectly, but in his own language. "And, yes, I suppose you could say more poetically that it means daughter of the woves."

Most poetically, it did. The waves never ceased to unroll upon the beaches and beneath the seawalls of Bat Gallim, having been unfurled across the Mediterranean along its entire length from Gibraltar to the cliffs of the Levant. The strong west wind that brought them from the Atlantic left them as they broke, to vault the coastal mountains and drive for the domes of Iraq. Once abandoned, the waves resumed an silence and shock, rocking as if in puzzlement, squalling, flustering, and then subsiding into the deep green waters over which new waves glided for hours.

At Bat Gallim, anything new soon was made old by the sea. Bat or was more brutal to concrete than were mortar rounds or naval cannon. Other than sea and sky, the only things colorful, fresh, and young were flowers



He knew he'd been a failure. But he was only thirty-six, and there was time to make good.

and a poison, because as he slept he had to breathe and air.

The Australian not only did not smile but resented from the smell of ignorance, and could stay in the room only when the Georgian was unconscious or away. They hardly ever washed, and every moment was tense, the Georgian's leavies belatedly seized against the Australian's pure strength.

When he could not study in an empty classroom and was not out on the sea, the Australian sat under the clothesline, as free from the track, as he could breathe. In the late summer of '70, and especially after the Munich massacre, a great deal of anger moved on the rule. Studying in the glare of a sodium-vapor light, passing every five minutes to do pull-ups on the clothesline outdoors, the Australian would often be incapacitated by the passage of a train. The brainy man than an infant as when he was taken by a flying wave. In both cases, he knew to stay loose, to wait, and to keep track of his handling so that at the end of one ankle he would be ready for the next.

In the waves, he was upended and thrown forward with the swirls of the water. And as he sat under the clothesline, overcome by the thunder of the train, he was still except for his shivering, but whether in the sea or by the side, the message of helplessness was the same. There are forces, it seemed to say, that work upon you, that you cannot fight. And yet when the wave played itself out and the train departed, he gathered his strength and his wit, and he began to fight once again.

He was an honest man, and he knew he had been a failure. But he was only thirty-six, and he felt that he had a small window of light in which to make good.

WHEN ANNALENE WAS fifteen, her father had told her, with a measure of firmness meant to discipline his great distress, of his insurance case after his death his body be buried and the sales spread on the sea.

A secondary-school student in a blue sweater, she was tall and awkward, the kind of girl whom one suspects will grow out of a work addressee to become a great beauty. It sometimes happens. After her father's declaration—later would not have allowed him to comfort her—the matter was dropped, as if the himself were an old man who had seen everything, done everything, and was ready able to bear the rest.

"It's against Jewish law," she said, dead calm, voice flat. "It isn't in my nature to do such a thing. Or at least it won't. But your mother and your brother, you see—we possessive—were . . . were carried to the crematorium, and with millions of others they perished in the flames. While generations of Jews know that at the end Jewish law or not, it will be an honor to follow them."

"But what if it's true," Annaleene asked, "and God means the dead? What then?"

"Annaleene, if God can raise the dead, He can undoubtedly reconstruct them even if they have dissolved on the

wind. And if I cannot, then that's just the power. I want to know the destiny of your mother and your baby son, whatever that was. And, other than your happiness, it is the only thing I want."

Annaleene, on whose large eyes now were the beginnings of tears, maintained her own discipline, as always, and asked, "How do you go about such a thing, in this country?"

"There were ways, and he revealed them, but the hardest part would be left to her. "The not use of the physical exactly," he said, "but most of all will travel upward on a bloom of love, enthusiasm and light, separated into molecules and perhaps even atoms—how to have to ask a chemist. I will run into the air in utter helplessness hopelessly dispersed. And whatever happens to me I want."

"You will give my sons? I think the best place for them is in the sea. The beach at Herby's, in the center of the city, and it's very sandy there."

"Papa," Annaleene said, "I'll be alone." "I only tell you this now, Annaleene, in case something happens. I plan to hold on until long after you've married and had children of your own. I want to see them. It's very important to me. Perhaps a grandchild, a young man strong and new, can swim out and do this, while you and the rest of your family watch from the shore. You won't be alone. You mustn't be alone."

After this, Annaleene would sometimes wonder about the air from the chimney, whether like parcels of ash rose in the river of heat, how far into the crown of the sky they ascended and if they would partake, apart and alone in the sun.

And she wondered also about the sales and knew that would be accurate on the waves. These she knew would always speak, would be kept in motion by the rocking of the sea, and tried to spray. And the smallest of particles would work their way across the ocean mat, eventually, on the evening of the world, they would roll with every wave and break with every whetstone.

ANNALENE WAS THE DISCIPLINED at Ramstein Hospital in the German. Neither a pathologist nor a biologist nor a bacteriologist, she was essential to all three, and she found her line within deepening and expanding as medical technology changed to accommodate the advance of medicine toward chemistry and physics.

Because she was meticulous and disciplined, the hospital never failed to devote, train, and promote her, until, it seemed, in just a few years her position would be irreplaceable, under the direction of a department head. She was to the practice of medicine what a sergeant major is to the practice of arms—absolutely necessary, indispensable, invisible, and able to mean his position while speaking his mind like a prophet. She was there to stay and she saw certain parts of the future quite as clearly as others were obscured. The central part this lay before her was the same as it had been

when she started. The house would never call for more than a fine optical microscope and still in preparing slides. But the road branched off on two other planes. One was electron microscopy, and the other was computerization, for not only was electron microscopy type for conversion to a digital format, but even observations in lower powers ended up for it.

In a decade, or two, or three, she judged, she would be able to store images, view them in multiple dimensions, catalog, compare, and enhance them, all via digital scanning. This meant never devoted for specialized training. And there lay the problem. She had badly turned down a fellowship in electron microscopy in Germany. No one at Ramstein could think for a moment that this was in any way unwelcome. They would not expect a woman with the badge of his father to take training in Germany, for now in their genes among the staffs of German hospitals and research institutes, and in the professions, would doubtless be former members of the SS, former troops of the Wehrmacht, and of those whose crimes still lay in their conscious satisfaction that children and their parents had been led to slaughterhouses more terrible than the slaughterhouses for animals.

But when the fellowship would come up in Baltimore, London, Tokyo, or Boston, she would also have to go to the Academy where her career line her livelihood would be destroyed, she would be held back, frozen in place. These fellowships offered transportation, living quarters, every service of adjustment, and, for an Israeli, numerous sums of hard currency. She was intensely anxious about the development of the new machine. But she would have to say no.

She could not leave her father. Though he would beg her to go, protest that he would thrive in his absence, and even show it as when she refused, she could not leave him. He had no use for her, only the students at the language academy, whom he knew like an open book, and they loved her. And there, in their limited mind, the answer of new immigrants confused, vague, and emotionally overcautious, befriended him because they had fallen. When finally they crossed the tracks and left the Galilee behind they would forget him.

They might remember his slight watchman's cap, a new-colored Israeli officer's hat with a green band the color of a fly's compound eye or the fringe of a daisy petal in the sun after a monsoon. They might remember his slight tremor and that he radiated a feeling of age, his slow movements, his unselfish pleasure in their youth, his patience for them. But, then, when they thought of him in years out, they would understand why. "Oh, I wonder if he's still alive. He was a nice man. He's probably dead."

She could not leave him, not even for a month, he who held his slight body in his arms for hour after hour after hour, in the times when children his age should have been sleeping or jumping or bare in games, and the could not be. He had held her beyond all patience, so that she could feel his heartbeat, and sleep on his chest, and weep, and fall asleep again, knowing that when she awoke he would still be there.

This, he had been told, was wrong. The child needed help after what she had through and all she had seen. "No," he answered, "all the needs in know that her father will not be taken from her. If it means a year or two of absolute reassurance, then that is what it will be. If it means I have to be sent to her like a penguin father with an egg on

his foot, then that's what it means, and that's what I'll do." In the last time a year, when she understood that he would not leave her, no matter what, that he would stay in the apartment all day with her, and hold her hand when they went out to shop, that he was earnestly devoted and that he would stick to his task, if necessary, and he died, she hesitated. And she became independent and strong later than would have been expected.

How could she, then, leave him? He was not her husband, and could not go with her ahead, even though she still loved with him and took care of him. She could leave him only when it would be right to do so, when it would be necessary, perfect, and expected, when his leaving would be as if she were flying away in a cloud of heaven-ence. When she had a husband.

WHY HAVEN'T YOU BEEN MARRIED? her father asked the Australian.

The Australian brought his over-matched thumb to his outer phalanx, widened his eyes, and said, "Me?"

"Yes, you. Why? Why?" "You know, I already been said that around here," the Australian said, "in the Galilee."

"Who asked you?" "The beach, the Moslems who swim folding chair. I would never see a folding chair—first either in the water or standing while I get dry. The beach is not a couch. Well, he asked me. I suppose he wanted to find out why I don't swim beach chair, as he said, 'Do you have children?' and I said, 'What? Me?' and he said, 'Don't you fuck well? That's Ash is right me? Right?'"

"Right," answered Annaleene's father. "And I said, 'Yes, yes married.' And he said, 'Why? Ash is right me? Come to think of it a lot of people—a lot—like me the same question. And I've never answered it directly. I suppose if I had, I'd be married now, wouldn't I?'"

"Maybe. Why don't you answer it?" "Now?" "Why not?"

"All right." He swallowed, cut suddenly into the kind of self-analysis that he, as an Australian, as a scholar, and as an engineer, was not fond of and seemed to put behind him quickly.

"Well," he said, "I suppose I could make occasion, couldn't I? I could say that I don't get married in college. Did I? No. I didn't. I was too young. Then I was in the army for two years, and I didn't get married then, either. Then I was in graduate school for five years. Oh, yes, when I finished, I was thirty. My father died soon after I didn't take a lady. I'm not interested in things. That's when I went to work at the airport. I wanted to be, as it were, for a while. I can't say why that while attracted me into five years. And now I'm here. I could say all that."

"Is that what you would say?" "No."

"Why?" "Because it wouldn't be the truth. The truth is, I look sort of like a chimpanzee, you know."

Annaleene's father did not know what a chimpanzee was, in English, at least, which was how the Australian had said it, so he himself did not know the word in Hebrew, and Annaleene's father had thought the Australian had said he looked like a monkey. The old man closed his eyes and softly shook

his head from side to side, saying, "A monkey. A monkey" which was his way of saying, "You don't look like a monkey." The Americans, amazed, but still in good humor, went on. "I always thought I looked quite a bit like a chimpanzee," he said. "And, right, I'll take your word for it, a monkey And I'm shy. Whenever women have been interested in me—well I mean to say it's in love—I can't believe it I realize only long after the fact, when they're gone, long after I might have responded, which is perfectly scemantic, isn't it? Why would any woman be interested in me?"

"That's why I'm not married. It's simple. I've never believed that anyone would want to marry me."

AMMALISE HAD BEEN in the army in one form or another for years now, and that, he fortunately was of reserve duty, was to be the last. She had finished training and entered upon active service just in time for the Sinai Campaigns of 1946. She had been called up for the June War, had served in the War of Attrition, and all the times between, when she would return to the army for however many weeks a designated each year. But after thirty-four she would be free. On the ninth day of October, 1951, she would be released at 6:00 a.m. and never have to go back.

Ramadan took casualties from the north, and it would have made sense for Annalise to serve there in a medical unit. The army, however, offered the right to be dispensed, and she had always done reserve duty as a clerk in a transport unit in the Golan. This was neither an honor nor a dishonor. The transport of soldiers to or upon the battlefield is just as important as their care after they are wounded, and perhaps more important, if only because a battle won quickly and decisively does more to heal casualties and prevent them than the best of hospitals.

The depot was off Hix-Aljan, not far from the language academy. She had come to know as shaded yards, as tin roofs, as trees, and as shade as well that the medical teams. Though perhaps finally their idiosyncratic rhythms and physical diversities presented themselves. Even in summer, it was dark and cool in the cavernous garages and windowless or noisy where thousands of weapons lay heavy, black, and oiled on steel racks, remembering, poised, and eager



for war, for only when war came would they leap from their racks and be pushed out into the wind and sunlight.

In winter, rays of orange sun so rarely struck the corner at which Annalise worked that when they did everyone came to look, as if at an eclipse. In winter, the sun beat upon the tin roofs so loudly that the clerks and armers had to shout to be heard, it was so cold that everyone was draped in blankets, and the smell of kerosene burning in floor stoves overrode the smell of gun oil and gasoline. In each move the armatures gleamed like the sun as invisible vapors burned around it.

Annalise and Shoshanna, a young woman so beautiful that half of life was closed to her, as it was always the object, and never the observer—waited together to keep the records. Their registry was the luxury apartment of jets and half-tracks, tanks and rocketless rifles, submachine guns and field tanks, water tanks and field hospitals. All these apparatuses had an inkblot of paint and a history of checks and maintenance. Done in Annalise's splendid hand, and then in Shoshanna's seductive script, that, men, Annalise had seen a machine, bent to him, the records filled ledger after ledger on a wall of shelves.

This work the one of an encyclopedia never being read, and it proceeded according to its own strategy as it went along. But nonetheless the two clerks—one who coated men like a drag, the other almost aware to nib—labored carefully to make their writing beautiful. After all, not that far back in their families were scribbles like those of Bile and Jerusalem who worked not to make something permanent, or vainly so, like stone, but who labored because, as they did, nearly motionless, eyes riveted, thoughts disciplined,

pen tip rolling across the page like a boat on the waves, they felt the presence of God.

Annalise could not draw a weapon and was in handwriting that was on occasion her own and more often that of other clerks, both regular and reserve, something like the hypnotic work that adorned Asian temples, or the eye-rolling designs of an Iranian mosque. It was not decoration to which the women ministers were devoted, but rhythm and intervals that, with practice, could shut out the earthly life.

Even Shoshanna knew, Shoshanna who, Annalise understood, was so beautiful that she was sexually infatuated with herself. This, in turn, put men in an almost uncontrollable state. Annalise

found the definition that Shoshanna inspired difficult to follow, as it was never the object but always the observer in anything but desire she was far happier than her friend, but in the presence of her friend, desire seemed to take up all the space in the world. The armatures in particular were associated with Shoshanna, and at the four o'clock break when they the embankers, and the clerks gathered for tea, sparks flew. They fought among themselves sometimes, or seemed to argue as moral parents, or brushed like wounded animals. Perhaps it was that they were almost all conscripts, and therefore both young and readily confused. Or perhaps it was that they spent their mornings and afternoons pumping cleaning rods back and forth in the slick oiled barrels of the weapons in their charge. No matter what the reason, at four o'clock they were too old, too accurate, and not quite pretty. They tried to use her to go to Shoshanna.

"Annalise," one once said, "you and Shoshanna must get so used to being still all the time, and with your hands so full of ink, do you take a shower at the end of the day?"

"Ask Shoshanna," Annalise had snapped, although she would indeed have loved to have been under a warm shower even with that young ameer, but he embraced her with something even vaguely close to love. But he wouldn't have had it in him, because, among other things, he hadn't had the courage to ask Shoshanna the question meant for her.

Yet with the armatures, however, was something that Annalise always liked. They were men, after all, and not a single one was married. For years, even after Shoshanna came, Annalise had looked forward to her nervous duty for this, and other reasons, because the men with whom she associated in the hospital had families, and by the stove in the armory she found flirtation and youth, things that were closing off in her life, and the loneliness of actual embarrassment and shame, and what she could imagine, finally, might take place on the empty beaches south of Haifa.

It would all end on the ninth of October, when even the army would admit that she was too old.

AMMALISE'S FATHER ROSE from the dinner table and stepped to the end of the narrow hallway. "Look," he said, "the women are coming, and he's out in the distance, like a seal. Perhaps it is a seal." He went to get his binoculars, leaving Annalise, seemingly annoyed, to eat alone.

The light, which changes more by the sea than anywhere else, had moved into the natural tranquility of October. Then to normalize the north light that spreads out upon the sea off Haifa a milder and deep, a country lower of color that quietly brings out its richest hues. But in the fall, the light is gossamer as it struggles with shadows, of which there is suddenly so much that the beaches empty even though the water is warm.

Only the old women whom everyone called the

Shoshanna, Annalise knew, was so beautiful that she was sexually infatuated with herself.

whales would wade down at the beach, in their usual position, sitting at the water's edge so that the waves ran up their legs and around their chests, their hands, burying them slowly in the sand like the foundations of a pier. For some reason, they were never bathing suits for this ritual, though was a drop of foam over touched their hair.

"It's him," Annalise's father said, focusing. "Come see."

"I see," Annalise said.

"Look close up," her father insisted, as people do when they have binoculars (and then they won't go there to you).

She sighed as it seemed, but, to honor him and because it was so much soiled to glare at someone almost a mile away, out at sea, beyond reach, she took the binoculars.

Lifting them to her eyes, she began to turn the focus wheel even before the eyepieces made contact with her face. She knew how different her father's vision was from her own.

At first she saw only a blur of angry sea, crystalline in the barrels of the binoculars, the motion of the waves pulsating in and out of focus. Then, as she turned the wheel, she began to see the lines we tend to forget are in water, the algaes, the patches, and the ripples.

The sky came level at the horizon and she saw her hair beaming, sweeping like the ray from the Stella Mare Light, allowing like the guns of one of her armatures. She caught him, the indifferently awake past, returned, and looked him in.

"He doesn't look like a monkey!" Annalise said. "He doesn't look like a monkey at all."

"That's what I think," her father said.

Annalise hesitated for a moment, a moment that because of its brevity she knew would be entirely precise. The Australian was sitting outside an air museum, riding the swells. His body was hard and muscular. Even from a great distance she could see the changing definition of his shoulders, arms, and abdomen as he moved to stay balanced. He kept his back straight and his head erect as if he and his armatures moved from the peaks to the troughs of the waves, and the wind sometimes blew away at his face.

Annalise put down the binoculars, suddenly overcome with the same kind of slow pleasure she had strided so strongly in her beautiful friend, Shoshanna.

"It's not them every day," her father said. "I'll find it interesting to see if he makes it to December."

ON SATURDAY, ON HER LEAVE, Annalise's father moved his own dinner, and at five o'clock she stood alone on the beach, in shadow, as a break wind. Refusing to shake in the breeze, she looked off her shoes, dropped her robe on the sand, and straightened.

Though she had expected the sea to be cold, it was far warmer than the air, and even the spray that caught in her hair as she swam and held the warmth of an ocean of Middle Eastern rain. Soon she found herself as the best of

water between the chaos of the breaking waves and the white-dropping sea. This narrow layer of green water was warm and not as lively as the blue. She knew that the wind would cross it quickly and that after she did she would no longer be able to hear the noises from shore. The wind would drown out the sound of the surf and of waves crashing rhythmically in pulses on the quay.

In fact of the deep, of ships, of drowning, and of the wind that could silently sweep her away, she never stirred with the creases of a response. But as soon as she could no longer hear the surf and the waves, she relaxed, allowing herself entirely to the sea. Her attention, her arms reaching ahead in the water, and the huge rolling of gleam and gleaming waves brought her to a different world.

Though far from shore, the water seemed warmer and more buoyant. With Harfa compacted and Ben Golem unswayed, the water was the master of the world. In less than half an hour she had come so close to the Australian that she could make out his face. She stopped swimming and let her feet sink as she surveyed the space before her.

He was very interested in the prospect of someone swimming to his nation, particularly a woman, perhaps because no one had ever been out there with him except for a few Americans, and they had always accompanied him from the shore.

He looked toward her, and the water did the rest, pushing them together with irresistible rapidity. She could see his face quite clearly. He looked like a Yiddish boy or maybe an unusual Englishman, an eccentric, an aesthete.

On the other hand, he looked strong and decisive, even if his history seemed to indicate otherwise. Something in his eyes and in the hard strength of his body said that he would come through like a man, that if he were a husband he would be faithful, that if he were a father he would be true.

When they were close enough, he asked, "Did you mean to swim out here?"

"Of course I did," she answered, smiling as the sea never stirred in her life, a soft, aching smile that shut out the pain and had nothing to do with the possibilities of the future. Turning as red as a burn victim, he was for a while unable to speak.

"May I come onto the raft?" she asked.

"Come," he said, standing by her. When she took it he held fast, giving her something solid and unswerving to hold as she pulled herself up.

"I suppose if this being stuck in an elevator," she said, "that I won't be long."

"Stay as long as you'd like," he told her. "I was just about to go in, though it won't be dark for a while, and even if it were dark the lights on Mount Carmel can be seen for fifty miles or so. We could always swim for the lights."

"What about the currents?" she asked, mindful of their distance from shore.

"Oh, the currents," he answered. "If they wanted, they could take us all the way to Al-Anah."

In, strangely enough, the most sexually provocative words she had ever uttered, and yet modestly she said,

"That would be very uncomfortable, wouldn't it?"

He didn't answer. Her mouth and solid limbs were still half in the water—as the raft bobbed on the swells, the sea would run up her thighs, and down, and when it sank

deep into the crease of an uncaring wave the water went all the way up to the base of her neck, and then washed away, perfectly outlining her breasts in the vast tank top. Taking his eyes from her body, he surveyed her face. She was not the kind of woman for whom men would turn on the street, but in her expression was great beauty and grace. In her expression, in her imperfect, somewhat too heavy features, he could see experience, and suffering, and strength, and love.

A face like hers, if held differently if set off by different eyes, if shaped by bitterness or greed, would not be beautiful. But the way she smiled was all beauty, suddenly as if he were the first to see it. Never had she been so buoyant or so lovely. Perhaps it was the sea. God knows what she took from the sea.

THE NEXT DAY, late in the afternoon when the light was heaviest with color, the Australian sat in a deserted classroom on the second floor of an academic building at the language academy. Looking toward the sea, the steep slopes of Mount Carmel to his left, he saw ships upon ships of palms and other marks of western Jews, floating the beginnings of a golden sunset and slightly drowning in the wind. Everything was green and rich and red.

In front of him lay a Hebrew notebook, in which he now had little more and upon which he could not concentrate. Normally he came in from the sea, solid his energies and lessons so that he would know them with absolute certainty, and then pushed about. Not for an hour, but for four or five, he would read the newspapers in his new language, poetry, and even a textbook of chemical engineering, his dictionary well scanned, his notebook filling steadily.

He knew that within a year his fluency could be more than just a tour de force, that industries were developing with great momentum, that his skill might take him far. The place felt open. It was growing. Things unfolded upon new things, taking immense risks. Agricultural settlements lured in devoted engineers and in six months were manufacturing transistors and medical instruments. Who knew what might happen?

But this was not why he was unable to concentrate. He was distracted, he thought, because, in the courtyard before, several classes were singing. For people who had just begun to learn the language, they sang with surprising beauty. Perhaps it was the accent, or the mix of voices of several different languages. Perhaps it was the presence of the sea, the instruments of the waves, the counterpoint of the surf. Perhaps it was the women they felt, having floated free from where they had been born, with few corrections now except to things like the beauty of song.

He could not concentrate. He closed his books and removed his glasses. The music drifted below, a lovely, hopeful ballad, "My New Yosef." "The Day Will Come," and they sang it over and over again because it was full of subtle variations that they introduced so that it was new and almost as if they sang.

If he had anything at all, he had great discipline—physical, intellectual, and moral discipline. "Why is it that I can't concentrate?" he asked himself. "Why can't I?" Well, he knew.

A CLUMBY, MECHANICAL, AND RETICENT broke for their tea they could have the arguing, at a distance, of "The New Yosef." It crossed rooftops of corrugated iron and drifted through the palm, quieter because, in the winter, it was less. As the vapors of the breeze cooled it or sometimes made it less, the song itself, beyond its own rhyme and melody had the rhythm and melody of the wind.

Annieke made the tea for the last time. She in an army stove that was so black it would never get clean no matter what anyone did to it. And yet the flames that arose were as pure and blue as the most perfect sapphire. She filled a lustrous aluminum kettle with water from the Jordan, milk, sugar. As it boiled, she laid out several bowls of jam-breads, the milk, the kumera, and the sugar.

She cut the kumera with a blunt biscuit that lay on the board they used as a table, and threw a box of tea in the water just as it began to bubble. This was the army. They liked their tea black and baked, scalding and heavily sugared. And though it was army tea it had the Israeli scent of blooming yellow roses.

The mechanics came in quickly took their cups and made of cookies, and left to catch the last light of afternoon because they didn't have enough light to go around, and they had a never-ending line of vehicles to service and repair.

Shoshana, Annieke, and the seamstress stood far in the dark and flew off the drizzle water as the song sang in the reddening light. Annieke would never return to the army. The expression was tedious, to be released, but no enemy soldier is asked to be free.

"So, Annieke," said one of the seamstresses, a Moroccan, "what are you going to do? Are you going to get married?"

"How can you get married after knowing us?" the handsome seamstress interrupted. "How could she stand anyone else?"

They laughed at themselves, and it was ending. "Really, Annieke," the handsome man said, "you'd have to marry a student from the Technion. No one else would understand the very tiny talk when you say to all people what you do. Electrical Energy kinds? Argonment? What the hell are argonment?"

"At the Technion, Shoshana," Annieke replied, so evenly in tone that no one would have guessed how long her heart had been broken. "The students are as young as you."

"Then what about the professors?"

"They're married."

"All of them? Every single one?"

"The ones that are my age."

"But there must be a few," Shoshana said, "one or two."

"Yes, but it's a matter of probabilities."

"What are those?"

"That's what you can't—you know," said the Moroccan. "A lot of those guys, they can't—you know—because they go down on radioactive substances and stuff."

"Isn't an idiot," another seamstress said. "An imbecile."

She said more provocatively than ever, "That would be very uncomfortable, wouldn't it?"

Did any of your mother's other children survive?"

"Everyone except me. They took my food."

"The Jews?" Shoshana said. "At least she can look in the window when the Jews go by, to see as they're here."

"Of course I'll visit," Annieke answered, knowing that she would not, with no reason to visit, that soon Shoshana would be gone, the seamstress replaced by other armorers, the faces in the window those of strangers, the handwriting in the ledger entirely new. "Of course I'll visit," she said. That those years were over.

In some areas they had ended long before. They had ended when she had not married in her twenties. They had ended when, by her early thirties, she had no children. They had ended when her mother had been taken from her. They had ended when she and her father had stayed close to the sea, and their memories had been unable to dry and blow away on the wind. They had ended on the raft, when the Australian had either been too shy to respond to her or perhaps had been repelled by the fate within her that made her who she was. She had already dismissed him, because she herself had been dismissed so many times before.

This tea was the last. For many years now the seamstress had seemed to her like a boy, and finally the passage of time had brought the moment when she would make the formal separation from them. From now on, when the passed soldiers on the street, she would feel no connection. She would have left them and floated up into old age far earlier than she might have expected.

In the long almost before Annieke would put down her sea stand, break the crumple from her skirt, and begin to try her goodbyes, Shoshana had begun to cry and had thought, Well, that's just what women do when they are goodbye.

When she saw Shoshana, Annieke herself almost cried, but decided not to do so in front of the seamstress. Not they knew what she could do. So she rose, and she straightened, and she looked ahead, toward the singing.

There, in the window was the Australian, peering into the dark entrance. At first his bushy, red-haired waves, bobbing in the window from below a Vitagor's sea, were so unrecognizable—perhaps because his hair was so blonde, his himself could not see. With eyes hidden by study and salt water, and with great difficulty in focusing, he peered in at the seamstress and the cleric at their tea.

This was not unusual, and Shoshana averted her eyes, for when men looked in soldiers from other countries, not drivers, students in the language academy—it was to see her.

The seamstress watched her take her glasses from a rigid case, and saw that, after he put them on, he smiled. Though at first one of them had been about to mock him, he was stopped by the Australian's suddenly clear vision, by the powerful build, by his height, his crisscross self-possession, and by the air he had of someone coming among his own.

Even Shoshana was attracted, a rare thing, that the Australian was looking right, past Shoshana and all her beauty. He was looking at the beauty of Annieke. ■

HAVING A HEART ATTACK

Every year, more than 230,000 American men under fifty-five have heart attacks: What if you're one of them?

BY DAVID NOONAN



I'VE NEVER FELT PAIN LIKE THIS IN MY LIFE. It felt like the muscles were being ripped away from the bones in my arms, all the way down to the tips of my fingers, all the way across my shoulders. I was in fucking physical agony. And I remember standing there, going, 'Oh, God, God, please don't let me die here, don't let me die here on this street. Please, God.'

The human heart, fully formed and beating by the eighth week of development, capable of beating for a century or more, is a graceful workhorse, an elegant dynamo, as efficient and ingenious in design as anything in nature. It is mesmerizing to contemplate, with its constant beating, its quiet power, its primal role as the central center of our being.

It is the steady life engine that could—and does—the flow of blood through its four chambers and four valves is the closest thing we know to the source of life itself. All due to faith or hope or desire that the beating heart is as real as it gets. It's a miracle, that's all. It has a job to do, and it does the job—it pumps blood.

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OCTOBER 1995 • ESQUIRE • 143

I PLEDGE
ALLEGIANCE
TO THE
UNDERDOG,
UNDERMANNED
'69 NEW YORK JETS,
AND TO THE JERSEY OF
BROADWAY JOE. MAY
ITS MAGIC RUB
OFF ON THIS
YEAR'S TEAM SO
THAT WE ALL CAN RELIVE
OUR WILDEST DREAM.



WHO DO YOU PLEDGE ALLEGIANCE TO?



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Heart- Stopping Numbers

According to the World Health Organization's first annual survey of global health, coronary-artery disease is the leading affliction in the world. It killed 4.3 million people in 1993.

It is the leading cause of premature, preventable deaths in the American labor force, accounting for one in every five job-related fatalities annually.

Perhaps the scariest discovery out of all is that of a 40-year-old Egyptian woman (who died in 1991) whose medical record showed no medical illness "barring" of the coronary arteries.

Oxygen-depleted blood returning from the body enters the right atrium—one of the upper chambers—and flows down into the right ventricle. From there, it is pumped up out of the heart through the pulmonary artery to the lungs, where it picks up oxygen. Then it's back through the pulmonary veins (the only veins in the body that carry oxygenated blood) to the left atrium of the heart, the other upper chamber, then down into the left ventricle and up and out again into the aorta and on to the brain and the rest of the body.

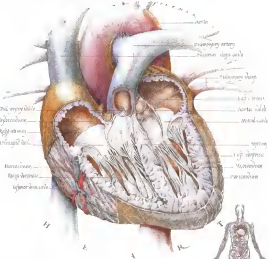
The key to understanding heart attacks is understanding that the heart, like any other part of the body, has its own blood supply. It does not draw the blood and oxygen that it needs from the blood flowing through it. The blood the heart needs in order to work is supplied by the coronary artery, which emerges from the aorta at the top of the heart and loops around the outside of the heart like vines. The right coronary artery wraps around the back and bottom of the heart. The left coronary artery covers the front and left side of the heart, branching off into the left anterior descending coronary artery and the left circumflex coronary artery. Coronary-artery disease (CAD) is the clogging of the lining of these arteries. It is the underlying cause of most heart attacks as well as the chest pain called angina.

AT THE TIME of his heart attack, William Feltner (perhaps not named as a literary figure) was old, with a son in preschool and a successful career as a creative writer in the entertainment field, standing in line between New York and Los Angeles where he lived. He wasn't exhibiting physical symptoms, or so he thought. He worked hard on his body and was proud of the fact that he had the strength and build of a much younger man. "I was in the gym three times a week. I was pumped. I was tight. I was in shape." He didn't smoke and had no family history of heart disease. Except for the usual diet stuff and some stomach trouble in his twenties, he had never really been sick in his life. He did, however, have a cholesterol level in the 220 range. "I was raised in the South, and we ate a lot of meat, a lot of pork, almost a lot of milk, put butter on everything. There was some time when my head had swelled a day from the way our people built and around the fat." He chuckled wryly at the memory. "It wasn't [real], it wasn't [fat]." He moved north early in his career, but that didn't expose things. "I was in New York and discovered the joys of pursuing yourself in the Jewish deli—lots of pastrami, brisket, and corned beef."

ATHEROSCLEROSIS is the technical term for the narrowing of arteries due to the buildup of fatty deposits called plaque. Plaque is made up of fat, cholesterol, and other substances. It has been well demonstrated that people with elevated cholesterol levels have a greater risk of developing atherosclerosis in the coronary arteries and the aorta and heart attacks that can accompany it. The reduced flow of blood through the arteries feeding the heart prevents the muscle from receiving enough oxygenated blood, creating a condition called myocardial ischemia. A heart attack—technically known as myocardial infarction—occurs when a blood clot forms in the plaque, narrowing artery and cuts off the flow of blood to the heart. The critical detail that distinguishes a heart attack from angina is cell death. In a heart attack, part of the heart muscle actually dies. "There can be cell death for a diagnosis of heart attack," says Dr. Timothy Denison, a cardiologist at Cohen-Soto Medical Center in Los Angeles. "Dead meat is dead meat," adds another cardiologist, explaining

will have crossed into heart-attack territory. Sharp, pinpoint pain that is heart-on-heart is stabbing, shooting or radiating is not likely to be angina. Similarly, chest pain that occurs only after moderate exertion at the end of the day is surely due to muscular blood flow to the heart.

THE BEAT GOES ON



THIS IS THE HEART of a healthy adult male—roughly the size of a fist and weighing about three quarters of a pound. In a healthy resting adult, it beats about seventy-two times a minute. That's 194,000 beats a day, 38 million beats a year; 2.5 billion beats a lifetime. It pumps about three ounces of blood with each beat, which works out to more than twenty-four hundred gallons a day. At that rate, it could fill a typical backyard swimming pool in about a week.

What's That Pain in Your Chest?

MORE THAN 1.5 million people in the U.S. have angina pectoris, the recurring chest pain associated with CAD. Autopsies conducted after the survey suggest that millions more don't, they have it. In fact, from angina to atherosclerosis that the legend is from other kinds of chest pain, including indigestion, pulled muscles and the imaginary angina of cardiovascular, orthopedic or psychiatric in their origins and origins.

Chronic angina is a dull, pressure-like pain (often described as a tightness or a heaviness) that is usually brought on by physical exertion, mental stress, or emotional distress—though that means the heart muscle is working harder and therefore its need for blood and oxygen. When

that need isn't met by arteries that have been severely plugged, the heart reacts by increasing its metabolic rate and turning up the angina stored in itself. This leads to a buildup of lactic acid in the muscle tissue, which is the real cause of the pain. A heavy meal can also trigger angina, as can cold weather.

An attack of angina is usually a pattern, in falling in intensity to a plateau, and the pain may radiate to the arms, the neck, and the lower jaw. But if it's severe enough to bring quick relief, usually within five minutes, and if the rapid response is a key to identifying angina, it's usually less than one minute or more than three. Longer than that and you may



will have crossed into heart-attack territory. Sharp, pinpoint pain that is heart-on-heart is stabbing, shooting or radiating is not likely to be angina. Similarly, chest pain that occurs only after moderate exertion at the end of the day is surely due to muscular blood flow to the heart.



The Excitable Heart

ASKINMAL, hives, or hives, called urticaria, are fairly common among the general population and treatment depends on the severity, length, and frequency of episodes. They're caused by an allergic reaction to the body's immune system, and are often associated with other allergic disorders, as well as

atherosclerosis and hypertension. Calcium channel blockers, and routine can also provide arrhythmias, as can various heart medications. Imbalances in the levels of potassium, magnesium, and calcium in the body can cause rhythm problems as well. Arrhythmias range, at severity, from benign (asymptomatic) to

regulate an individual's will to life-driven biology provides all ventricles a fibrillated in which the heartbeat becomes irregular, rapid and chaotic and the heart cannot pump blood. Fibrillation can often be treated, but if they are left untreated, it can lead to death. A small team of cardiologists at Yale and other hospitals are now testing a new device that can be used to treat patients with atrial fibrillation. The device is a small, implantable device that can be used to treat patients with atrial fibrillation. The device is a small, implantable device that can be used to treat patients with atrial fibrillation. The device is a small, implantable device that can be used to treat patients with atrial fibrillation.

that no amount of exercise or surgery or any thing else can reverse the dead tissue.

ness on this dark street, and I'm thinking, 'Don't die here, man. Don't fucking die here.' "

THE DAY OF HIS HEART ATTACK. Without delay, "You didn't feel right." He was dizzy and stiff. "I'll take a nap. I thought I had the flu." He took a couple of ibuprofen. But they didn't help. After a typically long workday, he had an early evening meeting. It was a good meeting, with friends and great guests. As he sat there, the discomfort he'd been feeling all day manifested. He started to hurt, and he began to "feel funny" up through his neck. He remained focused and handled the dinner. When it was over, he lay his head back and yawned. It was one of his last body thumps, you know, when your body's doing things. But you don't want to do it. I finished for the day and it was like my head didn't want to go up. "He was on the street, looking for his car, which wasn't there. The police in fact, just got to him but couldn't open the car, and then the police found him on his back, down both of his arms. It was excruciating, very long and agonizing. We ever practiced. The police." What is he saying to

Satisfied. "That that must have been old. It must be like one of those Telam I've been consumed."

Then the pain got worse, and it occurred to him that he was going to the right there on the sidewalk. He managed to get to his car and drove a mile or so. He realized by then that he was probably having a heart attack, but his adrenalinically aroused idea was to go home and he drove. "I thought I could weather the storm. I thought if I could just get into bed and the dream I wanted—the *Lake a Yonahata* or something, if I could I could just let the heart rest, and the rest would be mine."

But it didn't go many, it got worse. He was yawning all over the road, so he pulled over on a daily basis in Hollywood. Then he felt nauseous, so he climbed out of his car and began to vomit on someone's lawn. "I felt terrible about it, puking all over the guy's front yard, but I felt a little better, and I sat down on a little soft and put my head between my arms, and I'm trying to not see or smell blood."

THE AMERICAN HEART ASSOCIATION describes the warning signals of a heart attack as follows:

- Uncomfortable pressure, squeezing, fullness, or pain in the center of the chest that lasts more than a few minutes or goes away and comes back
- Pain that spreads to the shoulders, neck, or arms

About 15 million people have heart attacks in the U S each year, and more than half a million of them die. More than half of those deaths occur within an hour of the onset of symptoms, before the victim makes it to the hospital. More than 50,000 American men under the age of fifty-five have heart attacks each year. Though coronary artery disease is the most common cause of heart attacks, it is not the only one. In fact, a heart attack can be caused by a number of factors, including atherosclerosis, coronary artery disease, and atherosclerosis. In fact, a heart attack can be caused by a number of factors, including atherosclerosis, coronary artery disease, and atherosclerosis.

LIKE MOST PEOPLE, Belmer never gave his heart a lot of thought. He associated the word heart with emotions and surely thought of his own heart as a muscle. "I just took it for granted. The thing just beat itself all the time, and I figured as long as I wasn't short and running hard and not smoking cigarettes, then, that I was healthy."

After calling 911 on his cellular phone—and nearly passing out in the process—Palmer was taken by ambulance to Cedars-Sinai Medical Center. He was given morphine on route, which made a small dent in the pain. He was greeted in the ER by a team of extremely concerned-looking professionals, as he puts it. After examination, the cardiologist on charge informed Palmer that there was more

news and bad news. "The bad news is, you have had a heart attack," he said. "The good news is, you picked the best time in history to do it."

Felmer was treated with many painkillers and a thrombolytic agent to dissolve the blood clot that had caused the heart attack. The average time of clot life after the drug is administered is forty minutes. Right on schedule, Felmer began to feel better. "When that drug kicked in, I could feel the drug dissolving," he recalls. "I could feel the blood starting to move through my system. The drip is painless, like from the beginning to the end, no pain or other reaction."

Rahner's wife arrived and nearly had a heart attack of her own. "She told me later that I looked like a dead human being. She said I was yellow. My eyes were yellow, my skin was yellow. I was dead." An angiogram was done that night, and it was determined that Rahner had a large-vessel disease—only the left anterior descending artery was

involved. The next day, after a second diagnostic angiogram, it was decided that the thrombolysis alone had not restored sufficient blood flow to the heart, and a balloon angioplasty was performed to open up the narrowed artery.

Baldern was awake during the procedure—"It's my heart," he told the doctors. "I want to take a look at it." The only pain he felt was during the insertion of the catheter into his femoral artery. He could also feel the catheter in his coronary artery. "It didn't hurt. It was just this physical pressure that gave me an eerie feeling and gave me a little sweat."

WITH THROMBOLYSIS and angioplasty, Palmer received the two state-of-the-art treatments for acute myocardial infarction. Thrombolysis, dissolving the clot that is blocking the artery, was the most direct treatment possible for his heart attack. For maximum benefit, the thrombolytic agent should be administered within two hours of the attack.

Coronary angioplasty first performed in 1977, has achieved wide acceptance as a treatment for the narrowing of the arteries, with

more than 300,000 procedures performed each year is balloon angioplasty: a catheter is threaded up from the femoral artery into the coronary artery to the site of the blockage. The balloon is inflated for a period of thirty seconds to two minutes, widening the narrowed artery. Other angioplasty techniques have been developed, including laser angioplasty, in which the blockage is vaporized with a laser beam, and atherectomy in which a rotating blade shaves away the plaque. Sometimes, after angioplasty, doctors place a stent—a tiny cylinder of stainless steel wire mesh—in the newly opened artery. Angioplasty has proved to be initially successful in 90 percent of cases. In more than a third of those cases, however, the blockage returns within one year.

Coronary-artery-bypass graft surgery (CABG, pronounced like the vegetable), commonly known as bypass surgery is another established treatment for CAD, both severe angina and heart attack. But unlike angioplasty, bypass surgery is almost never used as an immediate treatment for acute heart attack.

When used in heart-attack cases, a bypass is usually performed several months after the incident, when the patient is strong enough to endure the rigors of open-heart surgery. More than three hundred thoracic bypasses are performed each year in the U.S. The classic procedure, developed in the late 1950s, is a risky bit of high-tech plumbing, as surgeons work in effect as ex vivo engineers, the flow of blood from the aorta to the heart muscle is bypassed around the blocked artery as, using pieces of vein, usually from the leg. During the operation, as seen in operating TV episodes, the patient is kept alive with a heart-lung machine while the heart is exposed, drained of blood, and cooled.

Will an Aspirin a Day Keep Infarction Away?

A lot of healthy people take aspirin three days in the belief that it helps prevent heart attacks. Which is fine, because it probably does. However, aspirin, which decreases blood clotting by inhibiting the action of platelets, is best established for secondary prevention, that is, as a treatment for people who have already had a heart attack. Low-dose-aspirin therapy in such patients reduces the risk

of a second heart attack by as much as 30 percent. Aspirin's role in the primary prevention of heart attack is not as well-documented, but at least one study suggests a major benefit. Among twenty-two thousand male doctors studied, those who took one tablet of aspirin every alternate day had 44 percent fewer heart attacks than the ones who did not take the tablet. They did not, however, have fewer strokes, and their overall death rate was not affected.



Fried Pork Rinds for Everybody!

A GENETIC mutation, *cholesterolin*, is a small group of people in Italy that have of *cholesterol*. They may have to be the best thing that ever happened to America. A *cholesterolin* industry. The *cholesterolin* gene, which causes a subtle but critical change in the main protein in the chemical of HDL, *cholesterol*, *cholesterolin*, is a *cholesterolin*.

antibacterial agents against the fact that they contain an active nonclassical cholesterol molecule. The gene that encodes the mutated protein has been sequenced and isolated, and an in vitro study of the protein known as polyunsaturated A-1 (Vidano (po-A1) like short) is under way at Oxford Island.

The P.K. Ghosh who is extending the study to include human cells.

Future application of genetically engineered apo A-I MIMs as a treatment for CAD. So far, this review has reported the data to result in experiments with cholesterol and redox lipoproteins of recombinant apo A-I MIM "significantly increased" the formation of plaques in the atherosclerosis models, in typical blood cholesterol levels that are increased 50%.

Test Yourself

A recent survey of dietary studies published in the *New England Journal of Medicine* confirmed that soy protein is a powerful anticholesterol agent, especially for people with cholesterol levels near 300. In such extreme cases, a diet of around fifty grams of soy protein a day reduced LDL-cholesterol levels by an average of 20 percent in a month. For those with lower artery-clogging cholesterol levels, the same soy diet led to average six-month decreases of 0.2 percent.

A remarkable added twist is that a soy-protein diet does not reduce levels of HDL (good) cholesterol—a problem associated with many other cholesterol-lowering therapies. So slight drawback: Most of the soy products currently on the market do not contain a whole lot of soy protein. To reach the 50%-goal level every day, you'll have to drink six glasses of soy milk or eat three cups of tofu. Enjoy.



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GENTLEMAN

European trends for spring. Ray Liotta in black. New slim suit.

On Fashion: Woody Hochswender

Turn-of-the-Century Chic

HERE ARE SOME OF THE key elements in millennial men's style, as proposed recently by fashion designers in Milan and Florence: **1.** Slim suits, often in iridescent, sharkskinny fabrics, usually single-breasted and double-vented, with a bit of Lycra in the rib cage to make motion feasible. **2.** Tight-fitting Ban-Lon-type sport shirts, the kind men wore in the Eisenhower era, very polyester, with a floppy collar trimmed with a dark stripe, worn under suits instead of a shirt and tie. **3.** Tailored dress shirts and sweaters, that is, body-hugging shirts and ribbed knits in stretch fabrics and solid colors. **4.** Loufins, especially chunky white ones, worn without socks. (Something designers on both sides of the Atlantic seem unanimous about is the importance of bare ankles.) **5.** Unpleated, tapered waist trousers, frequently cropped short and hung low on the hips.

The designers who specialize in these styles are Katharine Hammett, Tom Ford for Gucci,

Dolce & Gabbana, and Prada, but the influence showed up everywhere. The encouraging thing about the recent round of men's collections for next spring was the emergence of a strong direction in men's wear—a new look collecting around the elements mentioned above—that is quite “fashion” but doesn’t seem silly (New fashions often seem very silly). Of course, there are some cautions: It’s a huggers-for-the-office? Get out of here.

The trendsetters have been in a decidedly mood-mood Gucci’s acclaimed new designer, Tom Ford, was big on slinky, early-1900s color-

Tip optional: New suits from Italian designers clockwise from far left—Costume National’s shiny ribbed suit with T-shirt, Dolce & Gabbana’s suit with Ban-Lon-type shirt, Guiseppe Armani’s three-piece with wing-collar shirt, Valentino’s single-breasted with wide-collar printed shirt.





Perfektig: Soft first state-of-the-art, left, and first called Versé body sweaters, above, by Giorgio Armani

the business suit (especially the suit isn't necessarily making all men equal in their gray flannel or pinstripes). But men's design lately has been all about revealing the body, selectively, the way women's fashion do. Thus you had kind of doleful shirts and sweaters at Giorgio Armani, transparent shirts at Gucci, Dolce & Gabbana, Krisia, and Costume National.

Armani, who exists above and beyond trends—his main stylistic reference point is himself—was definitely on a body look. He scored with his sexy sweaters and his continuing experiments with men's coloring, including side-belt, suit jackets and metallic finishes on his clothing. In his quest for figure-revealing clothing, Guccio's Four's showed us some suits in black and blue as well as some beautiful brown semisuits. Moreover, a design house forever associated with the rotund, was a surprise comeback for the Milan men's wear season with its all-herb collection, which included checked knit suits, striped body shirts, and sweaters.

As we near the end of the century, all rather was seen worthy of reveal, no matter how plastic or tasteless they were at the time. (In fact, they seem oddly nostalgic) Synthetic or "technical" fabrics, with hints of the space-age designs of André Courmieu, were important at several collections, especially the Isacco and Versé collections by Gianni Versace, which had the look down pat. Katherine Hammett, a London designer, put on a memorable show in Milan that began with two faintly shiny male models in shiny silk suits, with funny little knave-like hats and pointed shoes.

Hammett's models had pencil mustaches and mustaches climbed between their teeth—late-fifties, vaguely Cuban, street corner types. They wore mesh polo shirts, flat-



Three trends: The nylon windbreaker, above; Costume National's shiny late-fifties style, right, by Katherine Hammett; as socks, below, with knave-like mustache by Gucci



See-through shirt: Krisia's transparent body shirt for men

from suit trousers, zippered nylon windbreakers, and orange, short-collared semi-jackets—the kinds of inexpensive clothes that used to be obtainable in certain cheap clothing stores on upper Broadway in New York (where the "blades" were made of such cruddy fabric that they looked shiny even before you had them deconstructed).

This represented the very extreme end of fashion, where sleekness, durability, and uniformity were no longer virtues. And guess what: The women at the show loved it.

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S U I T S



Belk Burdines Lord & Taylor Macy's
Dayton's Marshall Field's Hudson's



ACTOR **RAY LIOTTA** CAPTURES THE
DRAMATIC ELEGANCE OF BLACK
AS DESIGNERS REDISCOVER THE
POWER OF THIS FASHION STAPLE

BLACK POWER

Photographs by Troy Ward
Produced by John Mather

RAY LIOTTA HAD ONE of those screen debuts that make people sit up and cringe. As Melanie Griffith's vicious ex-husband in *Something Wild*, he turned the last third of the movie into a murderous bloodfest, giving new meaning to the term "violent streak." Maybe that's why people still tend to think of him as a tough guy, despite the variety of roles he's taken on since. From the essentially likable mobster Henry Hill in *Good-Fellas* to the romantic lead in *Corrina, Corrina* to a Green Beret helping to deliver an elephant in



Three-button velvet suit by Pirelli Sport; Ralph Lauren cotton-muslin shirt by Polo by Ralph Lauren; socks by Pirelli/Ralph Lauren; Hennessy boots by Joseph Fontaine. Opposite: Wall coat, cashmere turtleneck, wool trousers, and leather boots by Giorgio Armani.

BLACK POWER

Ribbed zip-up wool sweater, wool-and-silk trousers, and leather wing tips by Bruno Magli; cotton-pique T-shirt by Bruce. Opposite: Three-button single-breasted wool-and-silk suit by Hugo Boss; silk tie by Boss by Hugo Boss.



Vietnam in this summer's *Operation Dumbo Drop*, Liotta has more than proven his range. His own personality, he says, probably comes closest to that of the character he played in *Dominick and Eugene*—a medical student who cares for his mentally retarded brother. "I can relate to being nice to somebody," he says. "I've been in one fight my whole life and that was in seventh grade."

Still, it's his darker side that's most intriguing, and early next year Liotta will show it again in *Unforgettable*, directed by contemporary film-noir master John Dahl (*Red Rock West*, *The Last Seduction*). "I don't play a bad person exactly," says Liotta, "but a person who wants very badly to find something out." His part is that of a medical examiner who in trying to solve his wife's murder experiments with a drug that allows him to reexperience her memories. "It's a creepy, cool, out-there movie," says Liotta, who was attracted to the possibilities created by the unorthodoxy of the situation. His female costar is *Last Seduction*'s Linda Fiorentino, who plays a nerdy scientist rather than a femme fatale.

Liotta's never been a fashion fanatic, but he admits to dressing up more often lately. His already imposing presence is intensified in this season's all-black trend, shown on these pages. "Black is great because it's simple," he says. "There's not a lot of decision making involved." —CAMILLE COZZONE



**BLACK
POWER**

shirt; shirt by Carroll
1961. Opposite Sim-
ple has double-
breasted cutlery
cut by Galia Klein;
plain-front, pleated
waist trousers by CK
Galia Klein; suede
boots by To Boot by
Alan Bernick.

For more information,
see page 174.

CONSTRUCTED BY LOUI ROSE, PRESIDENT, AT THE FLORA, NEW YORK. CREDIT BY FINANCING BUILT FROM PALATINUS INC., NEW YORK.

Slim Jims

CHANGES IN men's tailored fashion tend to be microcosmic: a narrower lapel here, a higher-buttoned stance there. But at the last two seasons, clothing designers have been making a strong statement with new, very strict tailoring. Jackets are slim, close to the body, ultra double-breasted for freedom of movement. In some cases, stretch fabrics are blended with wool to offset the tight fit. Trousers are narrow, low-slung, and plain in front—a clear reaction to the full-cut, pleated pants of the last decade. It may seem like a style designed mainly for you guys

men and fashion types, but the trend is widespread and powerful enough to have influenced mainstream manufacturers. Fashion houses leading the way with this new suit shape include Givenchy, Prada, Romeo Gigli, Costume National, Alberta Ferretti, and Richard Tyler. Wear with a medium spread-collar shirt and solid tie, the look is simple and efficient—without being off-the-rail.

Single-breasted wool suit with double-wide lapels: picture by Stefano Bemer; spread-collar cotton shirt by Jilil Berardi; silk tie by Farnesio; trousers by P. M. Weston; signature Prada-branded stretch-wool suit by Richard Tyler; spread-collar cotton shirt by Prada; silk tie by Bemer.

Photographs by Marc Hom
Produced by Tony Metillo





Strictly Chic

These button-downed wool suits by Romanelli, spread-collar cotton shirts by Luigi Borrelli, silk ties by Tiesi, and trousers by J. M. Worren. Opposite: Cotton-corduroy suit with tuxedo jacket by Guccio Guccio, shirt with French cuffs by Prada, silk tie by Guccio, trousers by J. M. Worren.

Beyond the Boardroom

Three-button single-breasted suits by Prada; spread-collar cotton shirts by Luigi Berrettini; silk tie by Christian Dior; socks by J. M. Watson; Aquilone striped wool suit by Alberto Basso; pure New York spread-collar cotton shirt by Luigi Berrettini; silk tie by Tiesi Uomo.

For more information
see page 124.



Styling: Christian Dior. Hair: Christian Dior. Makeup: Christian Dior. Shoes: Christian Dior.





CARS

Phil Patton

Bimmer Lite

GOOD THINGS MAY COME IN small packages, but just how good, just how small? This is the question raised by the new BMW 318i, now in showrooms at \$14,900—the lowest retail price at which a Bimmer has ever been offered in the U.S. and, by no accident, almost exactly the price of the average American car. The pitch is simple: a BMW with everything you expect but the price.

The 318i (short for "four-cylinder") is the least but not nearly so small, shorter and more spacious, 15 pounds lighter. And in the seat, BMW has defied an industry shibboleth by coupling the car with a hatchback, hitherto associated with fuel-crisis econoboxes.

"This car is not about utility," says BMW executive Rich Irlman. "It's about being a BMW." But doesn't the rule book say it is? Well, buyers see that car as an expensive small hatchback or a remarkably inexpensive BMW?

The 318i is aimed at people who want more than utility. The "psychographics" of the potential buyer, the marketers say, go beyond size. He is oriented toward "extrinsic rather than superficial values," is optimistic, and is highly receptive to new technology. Who could resist an image as charming? The European version, called the Compact, has been a runaway success, but will Americans be as enthralled?

To establish that the 318i is a real BMW, the Bavarians offered up a set of classic American country roads in northwestern Arkansas. Beads of highway, official potholes were first discovered and then a reference not, as the Charleston joke, to local politicians and tourist-season prices but to stretches of potholed, laking towns with the anguished names of crossroads America: Jasper and Lurion and Hecox. On roads encapsulating the history of pavement experiments in the racehatchback state, the car absorbs the effects of car lines and lumpy asphalt patches. Heavy standard pothole gear turned into noise but not vibration.

Outside of Nat, Arkansas, where the straightest part of the suspension road is the Hadesian extended full-length trying to cross it, the light but doleful self-imposition steering keeps you out of the jewel-wheel floundering on the shoulder. With this and the admirably large and effective disc brakes, ABS all around, thirty-mile-per-hour curves are almost easily comfortable at twice that speed. But to pass the odd vehicle—one every half hour or so—that you

might find wallowing down Arkansas 63, you are obliged to drop down a couple of gears. That's very little power below 1,200 rpm. Although BMW expects to sell nearly half of the cars with a four-speed automatic, it did not show the future off. You need a stick to stir up the satisfying but intimidating sounds of its boxer's nose.

So how did the engineers do it? What did they leave out? Open the doors and you find that this car is not really so tiny. The front seat slants empty forward to allow access to back seats whose headroom is actually more generous than in the standard 318 coupe. You see clever economies, such as the simple exposed rod to which the front seat belts are secured. The dashboard is simplified from the standard three-series version. You get fabric seats and human-powered seat adjustments. But the pullout flashlight in the glove compartment is still there, and the outside mirrors and even the windshield washer nozzles are heated.

Most of all, they did it by daring to avert the hatchback, a configuration in general disfavored since it became a synonym for downmarket and took no place in our iconography beside the jaunty Corvette convert and occasional gas leaks. In truth, the hatchback is a handy asset, providing extra room and versatility of space—especially in combination with fold-down rear seats. (Such has gotten away with it for years by the simple expedient of calling the aperture the fifth door.) In a pinch, it can also be secured with twice over two-by-fours on the way home from the builder's supply.

The base car is well equipped, although you will be hard-pressed to find one. Only 10 percent—the dealers—will go for \$14,900. The rest will run around \$14,400 more—the price of either the Sport or the Active package. The former offers a stiffer suspension, while the latter brings a sunroof and more luxurious appointments.

Along the roads of the Ozarks, an abundance of small, busy white clouds of largely fundamentalist dissenters suggest another, implicit point about this car: French philosopher Roland Barthes, writing with typical Gallic caustic about the Citroën DS, proclaimed that cars are the cathedrals of our time. But is the car like the gift you are the country chapel of our time, a seasonary suggestion that the spirit of power, like the power of the spirit, can be concentrated in the smallest of packages, and often more easily than in larger structures?

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HAIR

Finally... The Truth About Hair Transplants

The latest advances in hair transplant techniques make it possible for us to complete most, if not all, of your work in only one session.

The old "pluggy" look associated with hair transplantation is a thing of the past. The fact is modern hair transplant physicians leave the appearance of wigs grafts containing one, two, or three hairs to create a natural hairline. But how many procedures will you need? Many doctors are still telling patients they must come back again and again for procedures of 100 or 200 grafts at a time. At the New Hair Institute, we pioneered the Fast-Track™ technique where we can transplant thousands of individual grafts in a single session. This means we can perform a complete restoration in only one or two office procedures. Today, we do an average of 3500 grafts per session. A hair restoration of this size would involve up to 40 surgeries using the old techniques.

Take a look at patient PH in the photos above. Before his NIH session he had the look of a balding man. Then, after only one session of 1745 grafts, he was on his way, the longer picture shows him 7 months after the one procedure.

At the New Hair Institute, we are proud of the work we do and the innovations we have introduced to the hair transplant field. We realize, however, that the patient is our most important judge. That's why we encourage you to do your homework. We believe you have a right to ask questions, to get real patient results, and, most importantly, to be given a realistic assessment of what you can expect from a hair transplant procedure.

Our education program is simple and straightforward. We offer you three informative books on hair, balding, and today's options for hair transplantation and other hair restoration methods. We provide you with a free video so you can see our results and learn about the actual procedure. For more detailed information, and the chance to see patients up close, we conduct free seminars across the nation. These seminars are a great way to meet doctors, have questions answered, and see several patients in different stages of the hair restoration process. Most importantly, we provide prospective patients with a private consultation in our offices with the doctor. Only a qualified doctor can tell you exactly what you need, and that's why, at the New Hair Institute, you won't meet with any face talking information. After a brief introduction, you will meet with the doctor for a personal assessment of your needs.



Patient PH before and 7 months after 1 session of 1745 grafts

Frequently Asked Questions About Hair Transplants.

- Q. How do I know if I'm a candidate for Hair Transplantation?
A. The only way to know for certain is to meet with a doctor who specializes in hair transplantation, but it's safe to say that the majority of men who suffer from male pattern baldness are candidates for this procedure.
- Q. Why will the transplanted hair grow in the same areas where the old hair died?
A. It is important to understand that there is nothing wrong with the scalp in the balding areas. It's the actual hair follicles which were genetically programmed to die. The hairs on the back of your head are "permanent" hairs and will grow for the rest of your life in the new location.
- Q. I've talked with several hair transplant doctors, and their techniques all vary. How do I know which doctor to choose?
A. We suggest you always look for:
 1. A doctor who specializes in hair transplant procedures full time.
 2. A doctor who uses the smallest grafts possible (1-3 hairs).
 3. A doctor who can complete the restoration in the fewest number of procedures, by placing large numbers of fine grafts in each procedure. It should require no more than 1 or 2 visits.
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 5. A Medical Group that is a recognized leader in true state of the art techniques.

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Mileage: 28 mpg city,
22 highway

Other features: Dual air bags,
optional onboard computer
Base price: \$14,900



MUSIC

Mark Jacobson

Symphony for a Hanging

FIRST THERE IS *THE WHISLE*, a solitary breath pushed from rusted lungs into the scorching desolation. Then the sax-tons, a dull rumble on the horizon. The harmonies are next, plaintively announcing the approach of doom. Finally, the guitar, a jagged swing across the crackling sky, a scar inside the brain.

There they stand: Van Clief, the God, to his right, dour old Ed Wallack, the Light, then, finally, Clem, the Man with No Name, the God, a distinctly relaxed tone in this trio. The three stand in a stone circle, fingers itching to tug the trumpet awl. When the music stops, someone will be dead.

Dario Mercurio, the Italian composer whose four hundred or so movie scores are amply represented on the new double CD *A Field of His Music* (Rhino), did not invent the music video. It only seems that way. Nevertheless, Mercurio—whose apocalyptic western work with director Sergio Leone on films like *The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly* has to be among the more spectacular sight-and-sound collaborations of the last two decades—has been responsible for his share of typography, redneck and other Beethoven's Ninth Symphony operas might be the biggest power hit ever, but when it comes to pop, outside of the flamenco fanfare that opens the Rolling Stones' "Satisfaction," there are few rivals to Mercurio's "dark, rich, and wild."

Unlike the purveyors of blood-red Western movie scores who preceded him, Mercurio grabbed the Hardi Williams songbook whole and didn't mull coping from such tunes as "It's My Party." In return, owing to the vast popularity of the *Leone/Darwood* pictures among generations of hipsters, Mercurio tapped an entire spectrum of theatrical, authentic rock 'n' roll. Is it possible to imagine *U2*, or Iron Butterfly, for that matter, without Mercurio's operatic *Stones* and *Dave*? No way. Black Sabbath compares those metal church windows to the big-thump dynamics of the One upon a Time in the West score, "Man with a Harmonica." Mercurio might

have swiped licks from Dink Dale or the Ventures, but when he was done, a million garage guitars were copying the solo Alessandro Mendini played to accompany Clem's squinty eyes. Mercurio's postmodernist overtones are signally underscored by instruments such as John Zorn's *The Big Gundam* (Venezian), on which downtown subverts hill Frenchie, Dimeville Gales, and Vernon Reed pay homage.

Ernesto Enrie's claim that by creating the soul equivalent of the *Leone/Darwood* (among other films), *A Field of His Music* provided the soundtrack for a cartoonish vision of reality that resonates to this day. Supersatirical concerns are, doubt-

fully, beyond the scope of this column, but it is difficult to envision a nineteen-year-old (or fifty-year-old) potential rock boy hearing the music of John Williams or Danny Elfman in his head while creating his self-conscious stuff.

This isn't to say *A Field of His Music* is all of a piece. Mercurio worked on a variety of pictures, and there is some very strange stuff here. Just Ross's rendition of the classic song for *The Ballad of Sean and Vincent—First Love* is strange. (One the five minutes of shimmering wordlessness from the track of whitehorse Dario Argento's *The Bird with the Crystal Plunge Straps*, too, but that's in the title theme from *Falson's* *Madness a Madhouse*, in which Domenico Modugno, arranger of "Volare," sings the entire lot of credits, down to the assistant editor.)

In the end, though, it comes back to the blackness of the American West, as reorchestrated by organist-involving *Cinema Reviews*. Take the opening sequence to *He's a Real Dime Man*. At first, there's nothing, just the endless plain, a whimper of the dry wind. For off, a man comes riding, a speck on the landscape. A shot rings out. The unknown rider falls off his horse, shot by an unseen assailant. He lies there, an unswerving image on the desert. Only then does Mercurio kick in the maddening jive's loop, the dervish drum, the pillow, the wailing guitar, and, on top of it all, the laughing wailing. *He's a Real Dime Man* in epiphany.

The Laser Line

New(r) and not bad this month

0-100, Another's Love (2000) Don't know rap, but I know what I like. "Good Man's Point of View" is the best take on the topic since William Holden married *Donna*. *Reelworld* bestows a pass.

His Chances, in the Air (2000) *Chances* (Hulu). Could this be as good as *West of Me*, one of the top ten records of the 1960s? Maybe. Eleven new (and loud) songs from the master of *Stetson*, Memphis.

James Brothers, When I Stop (2000) *When I Stop* (Hulu). The title says it all. The greatest brother duo ever. Also from the cool *Racer & The Strategist* in *Boogie*, the release of the year, is staggering display of country just from guitar Jimmy Bryant and steel guitar Speedy West.

The Soul of Black Arts (2000) *Black Arts* (Hulu). A collection of blacklisting, soulful-sounding swingin' music from the 1960s.

At Times—the All Records (2000) *At Times* (Hulu). All Green might have been a bit of a bore, but the record here sure isn't, neither.

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BOOKS

Will Blythe

Proud to Be an Ugly American

The secret of the *Ugly American* is to appear as dumb as his audience so that they people can believe themselves as smart as he.

—KAREL KACER

AMONG THE CLASSIC PERSONAE of American journalism is that of the pseudo rubé—the sort of faux-populist writer who ventures out into the world with a proud and bold ignorance, who parades around his lower certainties as a sign of his independence from intellectual fashion. The pseudo rubé may actually be dumb, but in the spirit of brotherhood he proceeds to be even dumber than he is. He affects a kind of suburban transcendence, a Tupperware populism. He flatters his readers by replicating their deficiencies. If they're uneasy about foreigners, he turns on the xenophobia. If they don't like the Clinton, by God, he hates them. And aren't those tragic, Nawatts, Mexicans, et al kind of funny after all? Just between us?

These days, musing as liberals or Washington types or conservative-as-bears, all three can make a pseudo rubé very rich indeed. Witness the case of a writer who is many things—the phibos' V.S. Naipaul, the Lewis Gizzard of the avian art, the Bush lamborghini with and without, the "funny" conservative (conservatives covet a poignant need to prove how "wild and crazy" they can really be)—the Republican-party repulsive himself, P.J. O'Rourke, best-selling author. His new book—*Age and Gals Don't Rush, America*, and a Red Herring (Atlantic Monthly Press), a handsome collection of oddities accumulated during the last twenty-five years that includes everything from spoofs of *seventy-four* disaster to right-wing travel dispatches—reads as readily to the rabid snickers of the able, whether (read: more conservative) P.J. was only musing his younger, more liberal, downward-bought hipster, is serious, trying to beat him to death with a golf club.

Now, let's admit right off that he can be funny—the fiction based on his drugge years originally published in *National Lampoon* in the 1970s is still hysterical. And let's also acknowledge that it's not quite as much fun strutting a writer who has the good taste to attack himself first, as O'Rourke occasionally does. Concerning his short story as a practitioner of concrete poetry (gratuitous examples such as "A Poem About Nothing at All" are included), O'Rourke states: "It would say that, as a poet, I had taken in the graphic arts, and, as a graphic artist, I was quite the poet." Such modesty is quite winning and quite deserved.

On the other hand, to trace the trajectory of O'Rourke's career during the last quarter century is to discern his evolution from shrill left-wing ignorance to amusing, self-deprecating critic of left-wing loobies to shrill right-wing ignorance. He has never been a particularly subtle humorist, no matter what wing he's winging, as this excerpt from "Why I Hated Cambodia, by Richard Milhouse Nixon," originally published in the *Baltimore* underground newspaper *Keyhole*, makes perfectly clear: "Now, being president is a really heavy thing. It's like being a very big sister, like doing deals for five or six hundred kilos every day... You have to deal with really heavy cats. This weekend that held the job held me had some fucked-up war going down..." And so on.

There is at least a sweet kind of goodness (good it has been the poet) in these underground pieces that disappears from the later work. In fact, some of the more recent dispatches composed with Billery settled in the White House, drip with the spirit of a writer on autoerotic, especially when O'Rourke is penning to the renowned in such barometer publications as *The American* *Times*, for instance, the following snarl with a blunt movement in center—liberals "Let's face facts about our disgusting political opponents," he jives "We've been nice to liberals for too long. They're things... A civilized person should not too tolerate the presence of a liberal, thus the presence of a member of the Ku Klux Klan. Indeed, it may be argued that liberalism is worse than the KKK because as Klansmen only have some people while liberals have them all... Liberals desert, abuse, and spit upon the human being." I couldn't help but notice that among the people roared in O'Rourke's acknowledgments were many liberal writers whose presence were not only tolerated but cherished.

You'd think that a car review would be an apolitical occasion, but O'Rourke manages to turn a 1994 piece for *Automobile* into a lit-and-run on Great Danes, cocaine bone-heads, wife nutcase, and, well, yes, liberals. After raging up a tale in a gas ball for the garden he is among, he giggles: "How could we be so successful of casual racism, so goddamn in every way? Didn't we feel guilty? Do we look like liberals?"

By the anthology's close, O'Rourke's habit of using *Wit* and their life on the porch lines for increasingly subtle jabs has all the laugh potential of a Keweenaw. This is unfortunate because in the short stories and editorial notes make obvious, when he takes off this rily Republican-party repulsive self, P.J. O'Rourke is a very funny writer indeed. He shouldn't have to rely on our political differences in order to make us laugh.

MR. PEEPERS, ESQ.

[Continued from page 116] Look, can ever make a mistake and stand there flaring as a crowd when he is wearing Armani.

"The most important is to make the handsome man, as a man with a light tan who goes to the gym. Not to make him look ridiculous, not to make him look like Mr. Coltrane, but something a little more amazing. A man who is the head of an empire, the domestic man," said Armani, smiling of course, himself.

For summer, he has been smoking in colors such as pale pink and things like wool-crope suits, leather-length thermals, sleeked shirts, palazzo pants, cow-arts, and slung, low-cut sweaters, "as the effect is still masculine but more casual, more playful—to preserve the firm but looser and comfortable the look."

"The colors are very luminous," he said. "Not beige, but colors of sky and dawn, pale pinks and beiges, black and white with contrast—for men to date, he said, packing out a pair of crisp trousers with black-and-white horizontal stripes.

The shape—strong shoulders. The vest—sometimes a crop that moves. The idea is to wear a close jacket with something underneath, not so dressed up, to combine the formality of the jacket with informal elements."

He was thinking of relaxed combinations. Men wearing blazers with pants, so the bottom half defines the top, and the man emerges half a rebel, which is all most men can handle.

"That's what I do—something new but not too bizarre," he said. "That is the first time I am grasping the clothes when you are in a look classic, but when you touch it, it is not classic at all but revolutionary. Very masculine but with sensuality."

That night, the clothes flowed. There were gorgeous things that belonged to all those from the land of achieved bodies. There had a soft, gilded drape in the front.

There were beaded backs and backs with acorns. The clothes came out, as he had promised, in groups—risky and cream, grey, stripes, white suits, gold pants, sweaters cut way down to show the etched piece. When the top was tight, the bottom was fluid, and vice versa. There were details such as woven leather belts and buttons on some sweater cuffs. He made a black leather T-shirt that didn't look wicked or cheap. Each Armani was as spare and complete that to make with it was to make a.

Even before he took to his studios, Armani had always seemed buoyant, a man of good cheer—open and disheveled enough to make collections of this scope seem effortless.

Giorgio Armani's clothes aren't just clothes. They are a way of life. Once, during the season of male grooming, when a lot of the models were smoking on the runway, Armani told me, "When the clothes speak, you don't need cigarettes."

They spoke that night, and twelve hundred people stood to applaud. Then severity fell of the handsome men in the world, all wearing white Armani paper jackets, leering on the runway facing the curtain. Armani came out, arms raised. On this rainy night, with the evening sun still warming the old factory he was shorts, the kind of thing he might wear on the island. Sometimes, when you are in love with what you do, it brings you an impact and a house on an island. Sometimes not.



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Julie Baumgold

Armani Explains It All

PAT RILEY IS HOLDING approval as the tall men walk out on the floor. Jeremy Irons drapes his fingers together and looks detached and haunted. Delsa Maras smiles and studies the clothes, as does Stephen, the youngest Tolkien, who is wearing a white suit with a certain military look. Most of them have been chosen by the master PR arm of the Armani empire to

bow in by the massive PR arm of the Armani empire to sit in the front row and be photographed with little in common but their celebrity and their new Armanis.

This was once an old steel factory in Milan. The kind of place that had broken glass and pigeons flying through random feathers floating, that sound of pinched flapping in the cold air.

Giorgio Armani shows just as Milan, and everyone wants the Armanis. They wait through the other shows as two arms in pump suits tango down the runway, snatched together in a pelvic lock, bending and clipping on their Cuban heels. They wait as others walk by in orange shoes, wearing French twists or leather postages. They wait in vacant train stations and palaces for Armani to make sense of the season, promises since 1976.

"Excuse me, I am a little bit late," Giorgio Armani said to me that morning before the show. He was wearing a black T-shirt that forgives an ass because there were no stars to forgive. His arms were firm and muscular, his color gold, his stomach as taut as those of the models who would show four hundred Armani "costs"—as they are called—that night. He was wearing a black T-shirt, too. To be wearing the same thing as Giorgio Armani gives

an indecipherable feeling of fashion accuracy. His T-shirt seemed to be saying that if you wear the simplest thing, your own beauty can emerge unimpeded, there is nothing to fight it. It is the truth of you.

The factory had become an empty theater with twelve hundred numbered white-curtain seats looking down on the lighted runway, the same simple, black-and-white decor of the space he conjured. Armani led the way backstage, bounding along on the creakers he has taken to wearing since he turned sixty.

He wound his way through the racks of his men's summer collection. He scratched and rubbed the fabrics between his fingers and had me feel them. They felt light and crisp, like the kinds of clothes that might just find their shape. He held out a piece of paper "to make it lying," as he said. The materials were weightless, all the colors looked as though they had been mixed with cream. He seemed to be a man completely in love with what he does.

"A great deal of work," I said, and he happily agreed. He is doing a huge summer collection to fill this large room. The collection is "as over always my style," he said. This machined style wears simplicity and order. It takes force, nature to make what is doing look as though it had always been that way. Now he's moving closer to the body his clothes once modeled.

For twenty years, it has been the right style for a more informal world, a style so familiar that one can forget Armani is the man who changed the way men dressed—with clothes that were noble and reassuringly expensive. *Not [combined on page 173]*



Waiting for Armani: The first was to show in Milan. Later a lion before his laughing models.

A MAN'S GUIDE TO BUYING DIAMONDS

ARE YOU *one of the TWO MILLION* victims of engagement ring *anxiety*?



1 Relax. Guys simply are not supposed to know this stuff. Dads rarely say "Son, let's talk diamonds."

2 But it's still your call. So read on.

3 Spend wisely. It's tricky because no two diamonds are alike. Formed in the earth millions of years ago and found in the most remote corners of the world, rough diamonds are sorted by DeBeers' experts into over 5,000 grades before they go on to be cut and polished. So be aware of what you are buying. Two diamonds of the same size may vary widely in quality. And if a price looks too good to be true, it probably is.

4 Learn the jargon. Your guide to quality and value is a combination of four characteristics called *the 4 Cs*. They are: *cut*—not the same as shape, but refers to the way the facets or flat surfaces are angled. A better cut offers more brilliance; *color*—actually, close to no color is best; *clarity*—the fewer natural marks or "inclusions" the better; *carat*—the larger the diamond, usually the more rare.

5 Determine your price range. What do you spend on the one woman in the world who is smart enough to marry you? Most people use the *two months' salary* guideline. Spend less and the relatives will talk. Spend more, and they'll rave.

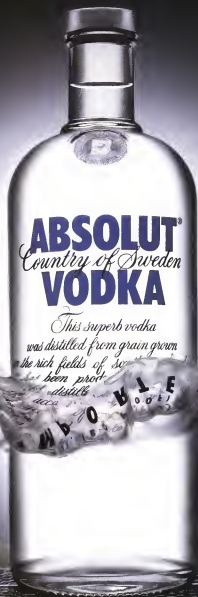
6 Watch her as you browse. Go by how she reacts, not by what she says. She may be reluctant to tell you what she really wants. Then once you have an idea of her taste, don't involve her in the actual purchase. You both will cherish the memory of your surprise.

7 Find a reputable jeweler, someone you can trust to ensure you're getting a diamond you can be proud of. Ask questions. Ask friends who've gone through it. Ask the jeweler you choose why two diamonds that look the same are priced differently. Avoid Joe's Mattress & Diamond Discounters.

8 Learn more. For the booklet, "*How to buy diamonds you'll be proud to give*," call the American Gem Society, representing fine jewelers upholding gemological standards across the U.S., at 800-341-6214.

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